



Lithuanian government resigns

MOSCOW (R) — The Lithuanian government resigned Tuesday, raising the prospect of further confrontation between Moscow and separatists in the Baltic republic. "I resign with my cabinet," Prime Minister Kazimiera Prunskiene told parliament after it voted to suspend controversial food price rises. The announcement capped a stormy day in Lithuanian politics, separatist and pro-Moscow demonstrators scuffled outside parliament, boosting tension already high over the appearance of paratroopers to enforce the Soviet military draft. Prunskiene, one of the Lithuanian's most popular politicians, has been at the forefront of the struggle for independence from Moscow. But she is regarded as a moderate in favour of dialogue with Moscow. Algimantas Cekulskis, a nationalist deputy and journalist, said: "Prunskiene's resignation means we will now see a move towards greater nationalism." Prunskiene, who had just returned from a 30-minute meeting in the Kremlin with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, told parliament she had expressed concern about Monday's defence ministry order to clamp down on draft evasion.

Jordan Times

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War continues in Mogadishu

NAIROBI (R) — A 10-day battle between Somali rebels and troops for the capital could drag on despite rebel claims, foreign relief workers there said Tuesday. The whereabouts of President Mohammad Siad Barre remained a mystery. Rebels had said Monday they were very close to victory and that they controlled all Mogadishu except an area around the airport. But seven volunteers with the international medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), who flew to Mogadishu with medical supplies Monday, said the government still controlled a major part of the city. An MSF spokeswoman in Brussels said the volunteers — four French and three Belgian — had made contact with their Brussels office and said it was unlikely the fighting would end soon. "It may go on for a long while," she quoted the volunteers as saying. "They said there was still some shooting but that all was fairly quiet in the city." An MSF spokesman in Nairobi said he had been told by diplomats that Siad Barre still had several thousand troops defending him and the battle would not end in days.

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Regent visits army unit

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday visited one of the formations of the Third Royal Armoured Division. Prince Hassan was briefed by the formation's commander on the training process and administrative issues.

Queen meets German organisations on Gulf crisis impact

BONN (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Tuesday held discussions in Bonn with representatives of several German welfare organisations and briefed them on the economic situation in Jordan following the crisis in the Gulf. Queen Noor discussed possible means of cooperation with Jordanian institutions with a view to initiating income-generating development projects for needy Jordanian families and helping in the economic rehabilitation of Jordanians returning from the Gulf. The discussions also covered Jordan's requirements in the event of another influx of evacuees and refugees into the country.

Ortega arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — Former Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega arrived in Amman Tuesday from New York on his way to Baghdad for a three-day visit to Iraq. In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Ortega said his visit was a prelude to a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis, especially before Wednesday's Geneva meeting between Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. He said he will meet several senior Jordanian officials before leaving for Baghdad where he will meet Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Ortega was received in the airport by Minister of Culture and Youth Khaled Al Karaki and head of the Foreign Ministry's Political Department Khaled Obeidat.

Islamic delegation heads for Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian Islamic delegation left Amman for Baghdad Tuesday to take part in a world Islamic conference which will start there Wednesday. The delegation comprises Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ibrahim Zaid Al Kilani, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Baqi Gammo, Minister of Justice Majed Khalifah, Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research President Nasreddin Al Assad, several Lower House of Parliament members, Palestinian National Council Speaker Abdul Hamid Al Sayeh and other public and Islamic figures. Taking part in the three-day conference will be 325 world Islamic, intellectual, political and scientific figures who will try to formulate a strategy for Islamic work in the light of the challenges facing Muslims in the world.

95th U.S. soldier dies in Gulf

DHAHRAN (R) — A U.S. marine was killed in a traffic accident in northeastern Saudi Arabia Sunday night, bringing the death toll among U.S. troops deployed in Operation "Desert Shield" to 95. The marine was travelling in a rented vehicle which was in a head-on collision with a five-ton truck, the U.S. military said Monday. Three other marines were injured in the accident.

Goulding in Beirut

BEIRUT (R) — U.N. Under-Secretary Marrack Goulding arrived in Beirut Tuesday for talks with Lebanese officials on renewing the mandate of a peacekeeping force in South Lebanon. Officials said Goulding met President Elias Hrawi upon his arrival and was expected to hold talks with House Speaker Hussein Husseini, Prime Minister Omar Karami, Foreign Minister Fares Boudet and army commander General Emile Lahoud.

Paris signals own plan to resolve Gulf crisis

Combined agency dispatches

FRANCE TUESDAY signalled what appeared to be an independent approach to resolve the Gulf crisis through negotiations offering Iraq an international peace conference on the Middle East in return for its withdrawal from Kuwait.

Apparently alarmed by the French position, U.S. President George Bush called on Washington's partners in the anti-Iraq alliance to resist pressure and declared that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein now had a one week-deadline "to choose peace over war."

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, speaking to reporters after attending talks between President Francois Mitterrand and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, said the Jan. 15 deadline set by the U.N. for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait should be maintained despite the French initiative.

Although Dumas did not spell out what Paris had in mind, a senior French politician and confidant of Mitterrand said earlier that France should not sit "inert" and do nothing if Wednesday's talks between Baker and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz failed.

In his comments to reporters, Dumas said:

"There was no indication Tuesday of any change in the positions of the two sides. Baker was arriving in Geneva from Milan, Italy, the last leg of a European trip during which he campaigned for allied support for the American approach to the Gulf crisis and cautioned against any independent European position aimed at a negotiated settlement to the crisis."

Aziz upon his arrival in Geneva.

"You know the position of the United States and France," Dumas said as Baker craned an ear to an American interpreter's translation. "I would remind you," Dumas said, "France supports an international conference since 1983 on the Israeli-Palestinian situation. So it is not a new position."

Pausing briefly, Dumas added for emphasis: "The government of the United States is well aware of this position."

Baker met with French officials for two hours just before Dumas made his statement on the steps of the Elysee Palace.

France's insistence on offering Iraq a conference on the Palestinian problem has jarred the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq.

The French "point of view" has been examined again this morning and have made each other aware of our respective positions," Dumas said.

Baker said France and the United States were in "total and complete agreement" that Iraq must quit Kuwait by Jan. 15.

He won support for this stand on Monday from Britain, Spain and Luxembourg, current president of the European Community.

But Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl have both pressed for a final peace effort before the U.N. deadline, now only a week away.

Mitterrand has been probing for ways to make a withdrawal more palatable to Iraq, including the offer of an international conference at some later stage to deal with the Palestinian problem.

French parliamentarian Michel Vauzelle, a Mitterrand confidant who met Iraqi President Saddam Hussein for over four hours at the weekend, suggested earlier Tuesday there would be a Franco-Arab initiative to avert war if Wednesday's talks in Geneva failed.

If the meeting was "but a supplementary closing, Europeans must not link themselves to this non-dialogue between Americans and Iraqis and spend our days remaining inert while war and peace hang in the balance," Vauzelle said.

Mitterrand has long suggested that the U.N. Security Council resolutions do not bind France from seeking on its own a diplomatic solution to the crisis. And France last week proposed, in conjunction with Germany, its own peace initiative, largely rejected at a meeting Friday of the European Community.

Vauzelle statement was the clearest in support of a separate peace effort outside the diplomatic efforts of the United States, which leads the multi-national coalition against Iraq.

Vauzelle said he hoped the Baker-Aziz meeting would succeed. But if it did not, he said: "France would have the right to apply all its efforts right to the end — and that's Jan. 15th because it won't be possible after — to use all its diplomatic capacity to explore ways to peace."

Vauzelle declined to reveal what Saddam told him during a four-and-a-half-hour meeting Saturday.

But in television interviews he described the Iraqi leader as "a man

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Aziz, Baker meet today, little shift seen in stands

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter with agency dispatches

IRAQI FOREIGN Minister Tariq Aziz and American Secretary of State James Baker meet in Geneva Wednesday in the first high-level contacts on the Gulf crisis and an encounter widely described by Washington as the "last chance" to avert a war over Iraq's takeover of Kuwait.

There was no indication Tuesday of any change in the positions of the two sides. Baker was arriving in Geneva from Milan, Italy, the last leg of a European trip during which he campaigned for allied support for the American approach to the Gulf crisis and cautioned against any independent European position aimed at a negotiated settlement to the crisis."

Aziz upon his arrival in Geneva.

va was asked if there was still an opportunity to avert a war in the Gulf.

"The decision of war is the decision of (U.S. President George Bush), not ours, not ours," he told journalists at the Intercontinental hotel where the talks will be held.

In his airport statement, Aziz tied Iraq's occupation of Kuwait to resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a linkage that Bush has repeatedly rejected.

"If there is a genuine, sincere intention to make peace in the whole region of the Middle East, we are ready to reciprocate," the Iraqi minister said.

Shortly before he left Baghdad for Geneva, Aziz reaffirmed Iraq's position that it would not withdraw from Kuwait and said that Iraqi forces will remain in the emirate on Jan. 15, the

deadline set by the U.N. for Iraq to withdraw or face war with the U.S.-led multinational forces assembled in the Gulf.

But Aziz told the CBS Evening News that if his meeting with Baker produced reasons for further talks, he would be happy to go to Washington or have Baker come to Baghdad.

"If Mr. Baker showed willingness to conduct this meeting in a sincere, genuine, constructive manner, he would find me reciprocating to the same spirit," he said.

"We made it clear from the very beginning that it's not going to be like Panama or Grenada or a Rambo-like movie — this is going to be a bloody, long, terrible war. And we are not going to let Israel

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Top-level Iraqi delegation in Iran for Gulf crisis talks

NICOSIA (Agencies) — A top-level Iraqi delegation arrived in Tehran Tuesday to discuss solution to the Gulf crisis and follow up peace moves with Iran.

Tehran Radio said Izzat Ibrahim, vice-chairman of the ruling Revolution and Command Council, headed the mission to Tehran a week before a U.N. deadline for Iraq to leave Kuwait or face force.

"We are to follow up a comprehensive (bilateral) peace and we hope... we can reach good results," said Vice-President Hassan Ebrahim Habibi, who met Ibrahim at Tehran's Mehrabad airport.

"We will also discuss ways of resolving the 'Persian' Gulf crisis with a view to the interests of the Islamic World," the radio quoted Habibi as saying.

Ibrahim, the most senior Iraqi official to visit Iraq since the 1979 revolution, called for progress in restoration of friendly relations between the two neighbours which fought a war from 1980 to 1988.

Ibrahim was accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister Saddam Hammadi, Transport and Communication Minister Mohammad Hamza Sa'ed Al Sahaf on the three-day visit.

Iran and Iraq, in another step towards a formal end to their eight-year war, will pull their last remaining border forces behind a kilometre-wide buffer zone Wednesday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said.

"The two sides have... agreed

to deploy their respective forces as far as one kilometre away from the joint border strip in order to provide a buffer zone," said a ministry statement quoted by the Iranian news agency IRNA.

The withdrawal statement was released shortly after the arrival of Ibrahim.

It said the staff of the U.N.-Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIMOG) which monitors the ceasefire along the 1,200-kilometre border would supervise the withdrawal to be completed by noon Wednesday (0930 GMT).

The two countries restored diplomatic relations in October despite Iran's condemnation of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait which is said led to a dangerous military buildup in the area by U.S. and other foreign forces.

Tehran Radio repeated in a commentary that Iran welcomed improved relations with Iraq but the crisis over Kuwait had increased foreign intervention in the region.

"They openly talk about long-term stationing of American soldiers," it said.

"Iran considers the presence of American forces in the region at variance with its national security interests and the excuse for this presence is the occupation of Kuwait... Iran demands that Iraqi forces leave Kuwait."

Iran's President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said last month that a regional solution was necessary.

Saudi Arabia denies Iraqi 'defections'

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia's defence minister Tuesday categorically denied reports by U.S. officials that six Iraqi helicopters flew to the kingdom with an unknown number of defectors, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

It quoted the minister Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz as saying the report was "unfounded in form and content."

The agency said Prince Sultan was speaking to reporters after a graduation ceremony of air force cadets at King Faisal's airbase near Riyadh.

"He categorically denied the defection of Iraqi planes to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," it said.

U.S. officials claimed for Iraqi helicopters landed Monday at Ras Al Khafji, just across the border from Kuwait. Two others landed in the desert, apparently after running out of fuel, they said.

They did not say what type of helicopters they were or whether they were carrying troops other than the crews.

A U.S. Defence Department spokesman said the first four helicopters were escorted to a Saudi air base by F-15 aircraft.

Iraqi Information Minister Latif Nassif Al Jassim dismissed the report as baseless and unfounded. It was "wishful thinking" designed to create confusion," he told the Iraqi News Agency (INA) Monday night.

King stresses peace option in talks with German leaders

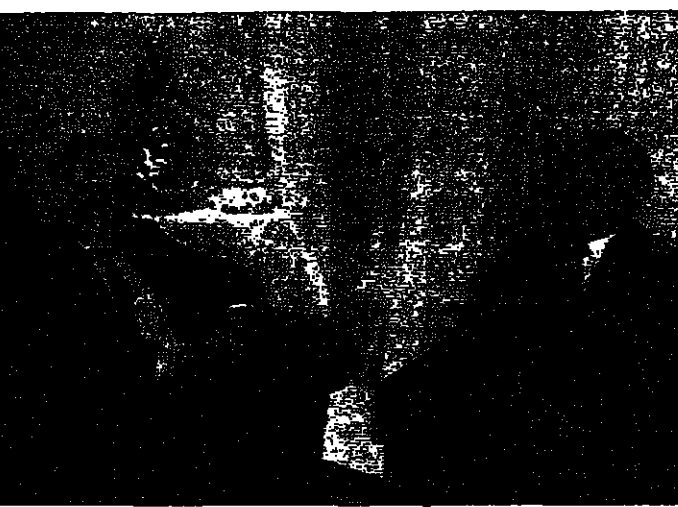
BONN (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday met with German leaders, including President Richard von Weizaecker, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher, and discussed with them the Gulf crisis and means to peacefully resolve the conflict.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the King's talks with Kohl were held behind closed doors and included a "comprehensive evaluation of the Gulf crisis and its developments."

The King "stressed the need to resolve the crisis through peaceful means," it said.

King Hussein and Kohl also discussed Jordanian-German relations, and the King briefed the chancellor on the impact of the Gulf crisis on Jordan, it added.

According to Petra, similar issues were also discussed during the King's separate meet-



His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday holds talks with German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher in Bonn (Petra wirephoto)

ings with von Weizaecker and Genscher.

The German foreign minister was briefed by the King "on the dimensions and repercussions of the Gulf crisis."

and in turn he presented to the King the European perspective of the conflict, the agency said.

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Israelis expel four Gazans to Lebanon

RASHAYA, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers expelled four Palestinians, hands tied and blindfolded, to Lebanon Tuesday, the first expulsions by the occupied authorities in 18 months, security sources said.

An Israeli helicopter ferried Imad Al Alami, 33, Mustafa Al Qanu, 44, Mustafa Al Lidawi, 27, and Fadel Zaabour, 37 to the Zaymoun village on the eastern edge of the Jewish state's self-declared "security zone."

Soldiers accompanied the four to a passageway out of the zone and ordered them to cross to a Lebanese army checkpoint.

The four, all from occupied Gaza Strip, were accused of key roles in the banned fundamentalist Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

They dropped their appeals against expulsion on Monday

Islamist deputies condemn expulsions, hail intifada

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Islamist bloc in the Lower House of Parliament Tuesday condemned the expulsion by the Israeli authorities of four Palestinians from the occupied Gaza Strip.

In a statement issued by spokesman Ahmad Quteish Al Azaidh and carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the bloc described the four who were expelled as "symbols of Islamic resistance" and said the expulsion "will not weaken the position of the resistance which will continue to fight Israeli haughtiness and arrogance."

"The four (expelled Palestinians) will become the ambassadors and messengers of the intifada," said the statement. It called on Arabs and Muslims everywhere to support the intifada.

after the Israeli supreme court refused to disclose the evidence

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Saudis concerned over French-German diplomacy

BONN (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia is concerned that French and German diplomatic moves in the Gulf crisis are adding ambiguity to the U.S.-led international drive against Iraq, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Germany said Tuesday.

Ambassador Abbas Faig Ghazawi said there was a "lot of ambiguity" developing in Gulf diplomacy as only a week remained before the expiration of the U.N. Security Council's deadline for Iraq to back down.

Ghazawi especially cited France and Germany, which, with Paris in the lead, have departed from the stern Washington line that offers no compromise to Baghdad. The French are willing to offer Iraq a general Middle East peace conference if it withdraws from Kuwait, while Washington rejects linking the Gulf crisis to the

Israel-Palestinian conflict.

"We are concerned that they could create instability," Ghazawi told the Associated Press.

"The government (of France and Germany) say they are not changing their policy, but we are afraid of change."

The Saudi diplomat noted Iraq had refused a European request to talk with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz after Aziz's talks in Geneva Wednesday with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

"Aziz refused the European initiative. That should have been enough to show them it is futile," Ghazawi said.

Baker was in Bonn Tuesday after visiting France, trying to keep the European countries in line with the U.S. policy.

The ambassador spoke to AP after leading a panel of Saudi business leaders and intellectuals

in a news conference starting a two-week tour of German cities to get the Saudi viewpoint across to the German public.

Saudi Arabia's King Fahd believes an international force will be needed in the Gulf area even after the current crisis ends, British officials said Monday.

They said the king, currently hosted a U.S.-dominated force of around half a million men following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, made the remarks during late-night talks with visiting British Prime Minister John Major.

"As regards regional security, the king said there would be a need for an international force in the area but this needed to be discussed more in the months ahead," one official told reporters travelling with Major.

Officials said King Fahd also told Major he did not believe

Regent hits U.N. approach to Mideast problems

IRBID (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, said Tuesday there was a big gap between international law and the administration of international justice and cited as an example the recent United Nations General Assembly resolution calling for an international peace conference on the Middle East.

In a lecture at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), Prince Hassan said that Arab and Muslim masses were in a state of confusion over the Gulf crisis.

On the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Regent noted that U.N. Security Council Resolution 681 did not include a provision for convening an international peace conference, but such a call was only included in a non-binding statement by the council's chairman voicing the conviction of some of the council's members that holding such a conference in the future will help establish peace.

"After 23 years of Israeli occupation of Arab land and the issuance of many statements condemning this occupation and annexation of land by force, we were surprised after Aug. 2 by the adoption of more than ten Security Council resolutions, all of which rejecting the principle of acquisition of land by force," the Regent said.

On the Gulf crisis, Prince Hassan said the issue is an inter-Arab dispute "whose reflections touch upon human dignity because of the great discrepancy between the legal dimension and the application of justice."

The Regent referred to the roundtable conference held in Amman on the implementation of the Gulf crisis on the region in

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The burden of being on the right side

The following article, written by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, appeared in the Jan. 6 issue of the Boston Globe.

By Hassan Ben Talal

AMMAN — Civilised societies generally operate on the assumption that in international affairs, as in everyday life, politics should be predicated on the fundamental premise that people do matter.

Needless to say, that assumption is not always upheld by nations and by the men who lead them.

That is what we are witnessing today on account of the Gulf crisis. Industrialised nations and their regional allies have moved in a lockstep since last August in protest against Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

They have, however, woefully failed to give adequate recognition to the fact that economic embargoes, like tossaway insults in daily life, can create lasting wounds on innocent victims.

My country, Jordan, has been wounded grievously because of the Gulf crisis. Jordan has joined the international community in

implementing U.N. sanctions on Iraq — which was, until recently, our biggest trading partner. Ironically, now we find ourselves bearing the tragic and unsustainable burden of being on the "right side."

The Report report, which was recently commissioned by the United Nations secretary general, said that Jordan's losses for 1990-1991 would be at least \$5.2 billion. If we take into account factors besides trade and tourism losses, then the figure soars beyond \$9 billion, or nearly 60 per cent of Jordan's GNP.

These factors include the loss of jobs and assets of Jordanians previously employed in the oil-rich Gulf, the cost of resettling the refugees in Jordan, the monumental increase in the price of oil, and the demographic transfer into Jordan of Palestinians.

Plainly put, there is a limit to what can be endured by Jordan. We can hardly cope with our current burdens, let alone with the nightmare of a mass demographic transfer. And global leaders appear to be proceeding as though people did not matter, particularly Jordanian people.

How has the world community responded to our pleas for assistance? At best, feebly. Although the extent of Jordan's economic losses has been well documented by a number of international agencies, we have received less than \$200 million in aid. It's a miracle that we have managed at all and our economic survival certainly has little to do with those who have called themselves our traditional friends and to whom Jordan has more than amply demonstrated its friendship.

We recognise, of course, that in international affairs — as in the everyday lives of ordinary people — there are wheels within wheels that account for the actions of nations and their leaders, no doubt our economic burdens would be lighter, and some of our debts would be forgiven, had Jordan been less consistent in keeping open channels of communication in pursuit of a peaceful solution in the Gulf.

I like to believe, however, that membership in the community of nations in this time of widening democracy offers member states the right to make democratic decisions. So why should Jordan not be permitted to fashion its own stance? Why should we have to subscribe to a chorus of shrill voices that may not necessarily be right?

We are clearly paying the penalty for subscribing to our principles of moderation and discipline. The question is, how long can we afford to pay this price?

Another question is, does anybody out there really care what happens to Jordan?

For a country such as Jordan, which doesn't possess revenue-generating natural resources like oil and natural gas survival — let alone accelerated economic development — depends on the support and cooperation of the international community. But that community hasn't accommodated us lately, even though Jordan believes it has more than shown its spirit and strength in the common cause of peace.

Stranded Somalis may find deliverance in revolt at home

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — The rebellion in Somalia, which reached the capital Mogadishu this week, may hold the key to resolving a major problem confronting about 450 Somalis who are stranded in Jordan after leaving Kuwait in August. The problem of fears of persecution upon return home by the regime of Muhammad Siad Barre.

It appeared almost certain Tuesday that the United Somali Congress (USC), the leading rebel movement against President Siad Barre, was assuming control of Mogadishu after a week of fierce fighting.

Somali refugees in Jordan, mostly from the north where the rebellion took roots several years ago, are hopeful that they would finally be able to go home along with their two million or so compatriots living in camps in Ethiopia if the USC assumes total control of the country.

"We are from the north and if we were to fly into Mogadishu nothing but persecution, and perhaps even death, awaited us at the hands of the Siad Barre regime," said a Somali, who declined to be named, but said he worked as an engineer in Kuwait prior to the Iraqi invasion of Aug. 2.

The Somali community in Kuwait totalled around 1,700 and about 1,000 of them fled the country after the invasion. But in Jordan, they faced a major problem: Most of them could not return home because of fears of persecution and others did not want to go back to their impoverished country of eight million where little chance awaited them of making a decent livelihood.

The only countries which allowed in Somali nationals without prior visas were Egypt, Sudan, Libya and Syria. The problems of the refugees from Kuwait were further compounded by the cancellation in June of their passports by the Somali government, which stipulated

that every Somali should obtain a new passport and informed all airlines that the old passports were no longer valid.

Of the 1,000 who arrived here since August, about 550 have left for Syria, Libya, Egypt and Sudan as well as other countries to which they had visas. Subsequently, Egypt and Syria banned free entry to Somali nationals, thus leaving the rest stranded in Jordan to seek help from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

Women and children from the bulk of the community in Jordan. At least eight babies were born here. Many of the menfolk have their families staying in refugee camps in Ethiopia, but they could not join them because no international relief agency was willing to fly them. U.N. agencies do not fly refugees to destinations they have only tourist visas for.

According to relief officials, 154 of the Somalis are housed at the Azraq camp run by the Jordan Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) and 294 are staying at buildings and hotels in and around Amman.

While the Azraq camp residents are looked after by the Red Crescent, the UNHCR helps those in Amman by paying rent and providing rations, according to UNHCR Chief of Mission Francesco Galindo.

"We have no magic solutions to the problem," said Galindo. "The UNHCR is an organisation of the General Assembly and we have to work very much within the framework of our mandate and guidelines," he told the Jordan Times.

"We understand the problems of refugees and would like to help them in whatever way we can, but sometimes it becomes impossible for us because of the constraints and nature of the UNHCR mandate," he added.

He explained that the agency had to process each case individually and determine whether the person concerned qualified to be categorised as "refugee."

"Also, one has to see the

problem as part of the general picture of refugees all over the world," he said adding that about 15 million people were living outside their countries in refugee camps.

The Somalis now staying at Azraq camp moved there only after weeks of persuasion since they were reluctant to be away from Amman, where they believed they had a better chance of contacting relatives and friends who could address their immediate "no-destination" problem, said one of the leaders of the community who is living in Amman.

"We are also afraid for our small children, including the new-borns, and the aged who would be left to face severe weather in the desert," he told the Jordan Times.

Most of those at Azraq were moved there after their return to Jordan from the Kingdom's border with Syria, which denied them entry, in November.

Some of them were stranded in the no-man's-land between Jordan and Syria for two nights before being finally told that the Syrian government had revoked the free entry status of Somalis in the country," said an official of another U.N. agency in Amman.

Almost all the Somalis interviewed by the Jordan Times said they had intention of staying in Jordan and seeking jobs in the Kingdom.

"All I want is to rejoin my family in a refugee camp in Ethiopia," asserted one of them, who said he was working as an accountant in Kuwait. "I have a visa for Ethiopia but it is at the Ethiopian embassy in Abu Dhabi; so in order to get the Ethiopian visa I have to obtain a visa for the United Arab Emirates," he added.

But, with the possible changes in Somalia, brought in by the rebellion, many hope that the situation would clear itself soon so that they could fly home.

"It is too early yet," commented the engineer. "Everything depends on what happens in the next few days."

Jordan cannot cope with new influx of evacuees without international aid

By Nar Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In case of a massive potential influx of about two million people into Jordan in the event of a war, the Kingdom would not be in a position to face it unless the international community renders its assistance upfront, according to Staffan de Mistura, (of Sweden) special envoy of Prince Sadruddin Agakhan, who in turn is the personal representative of the U.N. secretary general for humanitarian issues that arise because of the Gulf crisis.

"We have to remember that Jordan received 850,000 people in a very short while, this summer — which in terms of the number of population is more or less equivalent to 55 million people in the United States and 13 million people in the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, Jordan managed to sort itself out on its own with the assistance of the U.N. and the Red Cross," de Mistura told the Jordan Times.

He added that now, with the

resources depleted and with an estimated two million evacuees coming into Jordan in case of war (1.3 million Egyptian, others Palestinians and Iraqis) "under the current circumstances, unless the international community does not put upfront some assistance, Jordan would not be in a position to face it," de Mistura asserted.

De Mistura has witnessed many evacuation programmes in his 20 years working for the U.N., supervising the evacuation process all over the world, including Vietnam.

He also followed up on Jordan's handling of the previous repatriation of evacuees last summer. "Jordan was outstanding in terms of rapidity, generosity and effectiveness," he said. "Not one single person got lost or died of disease," he added.

Asked about what Jordan should do if evacuees begin pouring into the country, he said: "We would hope Jordan would do exactly what it has already done. But what we do

know is that Jordan would not be in a position to do that unless we help them, because so many things are involved (tents, food, money, water). These cannot be fabricated out of nothing. The economy is already affected by the economic situation in the region," de Mistura affirmed.

De Mistura, who attended the roundtable conference at the invitation of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, said he found the conference useful and timely. "It was a useful tool of thought for politicians and experts," he said. Though many in the international arena have come to Jordan, realising its needs and hardship, world attention is still not focused on Jordan's situation.

According to de Mistura, "unfortunately, world attention tends to be focused on one thing at a time."

He added: "The tragedy of war will be among civilians and where will they flee? To Jordan. It is our duty to draw the attention to policy-makers all over the

world, some of whom are spending \$30,000 per second on formidable war machines in the area. One should also think of using some of the resources on human suffering."

Asked about what the U.N. could do on its part to attract world attention on Jordan, de Mistura said that the secretary general of the U.N. had appointed Prince Sadruddin Agakhan as his personal representative on humanitarian issues. "The prince has been making several public statements, conferences, appeals, both in writing and verbally. He has visited the region and prepared plans of action," de Mistura said.

But he admitted that world attention had been focused on the military and political scenes "and they are saying 'we'll take care of it if it afterwards'. The truth is, it cannot be taken care of afterwards because Jordan will not be in a position to face it. We must take care of it now."

De Mistura, who also met

with Salameh Hammad, head of a governmental committee for evacuees, the UNDP director, UNICEF director, "Medicines sans frontières" and other experts in his three-day visit in the Kingdom, said the purpose of his tour was to attend the roundtable conference and to assess the current state of readiness for a possible new influx of evacuees and the requirements needed for that.

"The next step for me is to report back to Prince Sadruddin, who will call a meeting on Friday, in Geneva. Together with the UNDP coordinator, a special appeal to the international community will be made in order to assist countries affected by the crisis, in particular Jordan," he said. De Mistura added that Jordan's past and future influx of evacuees will be discussed. "The appeal will be linked to the need to intervene before the crisis," he said. "There is still time to provide Jordan with assistance so that it could face the possible new influx," he added.

Princess Basma, Athem review voluntary work

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday reviewed with Social Development Minister Yousef Al Athem issues pertaining to the current circumstances Jordan is passing through.

The minister listened to a briefing about the fund's projects and the services offered by its various social development centres and the role of the fund as a partner in development and a catalyst for national capacities and resources.

Talking part in the meeting was the Lower House of Parliament's Member Ahmad Quteish Al Azaideh.

channelling and maximising the joint effort to benefit the largest number of people, particularly under the current circumstances Jordan is passing through.

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Talking part in the meeting was the Lower House of Parliament's Member Ahmad Quteish Al Azaideh.

Jordan, Japan to discuss economic, financial assistance

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Planning Khaled Amin Abdullah is going to Tokyo Wednesday for talks with Japanese ministers of foreign affairs, finance, international trade and Japanese industrialists and businessmen as well as the heads of Japanese funds for international economic cooperation.

The discussions will focus on Japan's economic and financial assistance to Jordan to help the country overcome the adverse effects of the Gulf crisis on the national economy and the imposition of sanctions against Iraq.

Abdullah will also discuss economic and technical cooperation with various Japanese organisations.

Following the Gulf crisis, Japan allocated a \$2 billion fund for assistance to Turkey, Jordan and Egypt to help them overcome the losses to their economies resulting from the Gulf crisis.

Last month, Dr. Abdullah and Japan's Ambassador to Jordan Tadayuki Nonoyama signed memoranda for a Japanese loan of \$83 million to Jordan in what was described as a corrective loan for industry and trade.

The loan would help finance Jordan's imports of commodities

and services in conjunction with the World Bank, which had earlier supplied Jordan with a corrective loan totalling \$150 million, approved in 1989.

In November, Japan announced it was offering Jordan a \$100 million loan as part of its assistance to the Kingdom to help it purchase various commodities and to overcome severe economic losses sustained during the Gulf crisis.

Japan had also allocated \$1.4 billion as direct assistance to all countries affected by the Gulf crisis, including Jordan, and the minister is expected to discuss subjects related to these loans and grants to the Kingdom.

Dr. Abdullah told the Jordan Times that in his talks with the Japanese officials he might reach an understanding on the reimbursement of promised Japanese soft loans to Jordan.

He said that the organisations he intends to deal with during the visit are: the Japanese Exim (export import) Bank, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japanese Fund for overseas Economic Cooperation.

Dr. Abdullah, who is accompanied by the director of planning at his ministry, is expected back in Amman by Jan. 15.

Civil defence heads review preparedness for emergencies

AMMAN (J.T.) — Civil Defence Department (CDD) Director General Adnan Al Ghoul Tuesday chaired a meeting of the heads of civil defence departments in the provinces for a review of preparations required to meet any emergency in war and peace.

Mr. Ghoul urged various departments to remain on standby for any eventuality and to be alert and ready to offer services connected with first aid, rescue operations and fire fighting, and to ensure the safety of the public and public property.

Mr. Ghoul attended a general meeting of the higher civil defence council Monday, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Salem Masadeh, during which a plan for "preparedness" to face any emergency was reviewed. The meeting also reviewed

plans for speeding up the people's army training programmes. Speaking after the meeting, Mr. Ghoul said that the council meets periodically and during crisis to review ways of protecting civilians during emergencies and disasters.

The council is in charge of coordinating various governmental departments' plans to combat emergencies like the provision of shelter and first aid services, Mr. Ghoul said.

In the meantime, the Public Security Department was continuing its efforts to maintain a number of shelters within the capital's perimeter, long-abandoned caves and shelters are being restored to use.

Mr. Ghoul said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that a special training exercise for the civil defence system would be conducted soon in cooperation with the higher council and all the affiliated civil centres in the Kingdom.

Mr. Ghoul was quoted as saying that the supply situation in the Kingdom was very good

U.N. pledges to ensure Jordan is reimbursed

AMMAN (J.T.) — In an apparent reaction to Monday's announcement here that the Jordanian-Iraqi borders could be closed in the event of another influx of evacuees, the United Nations office here announced that it was doing all it could to secure further sums for Jordan to help it cover expenses, totalling more than \$50 million, spent on providing for the evacuees in Jordan over the past few months.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative Ali Atiqah said in a statement that the United Nations appreciated Jordan's efforts to deal with the evacuees' issue and that the UNDP has so far paid Jordan almost 20 per cent of the total amount the Kingdom had to spend on the evacuees.

A government appointed committee in charge of the evacuees' affairs said it was recommending to the government that the borders be closed in the event of another wave of evacuees unless the committee receives the promised sums to spend.

Salameh Hammad, chairman of the committee, said that his team expected Jordan to face a new influx of evacuees should a war break out in the Gulf and that under the present circumstances Jordan would by no means be able to cope with the situation.

In his statement Dr. Atiqah expressed hope that the United Nations would be able to come up with the remaining sums of funds needed to spend on the evacuees and noted that the United Nations Disaster and Relief Organisation (UNDRO) was intensifying efforts to raise contributions from various countries.

"A plan worked out by the United Nations in cooperation with the Evacuee Welfare Committee has taken into consideration all the needs required to deal with a new wave of evacuees ranging between 50,000 and 150,000, but funds to deal with such numbers have not yet

arrived," Dr. Atiqah said.

Dr. Atiqah expressed hope that funds would soon be forthcoming for the Jordanian government not to be forced to close the borders. He said the United Nations hoped that the borders would not be closed even if funds did not arrive by the time a new emergency occurs.

A statement issued at the end of a round-table in Amman over the weekend said that international contributions to alleviate Jordan's burden and suffering have been discouraging. Only \$12 million had been received by Jordan as reimbursement for the \$56 million the country had spent to assist the evacuees between August and November 1990," said the statement.

According to Mr. Hammad who described the evacuees problem in Jordan over the past month as a nightmare, more than 1.5 million persons passed through Jordan since Aug. 2, 1990 but 865,000 evacuees, mostly Asians, had to be housed at makeshift camps in the country.

Workers' federation opposes demands for higher wages

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions (FJLU) announced Tuesday that it has requested labour unions in Jordan to refrain from making demands for employers for better pay in view of the present economic conditions in Jordan and as a contribution on their part for shouldering extra burdens resulting from the Gulf crisis and its adverse consequences on Jordan.

Federation Secretary General Abdul Halim Khaddam told a press conference that he had asked the unions to cooperate with their employers in view of the situation, but stressed that the workers should retain their gains and privileges under any circumstances.

Mr. Khaddam praised those companies which have refrained

from laying off workers due to difficult financial circumstances and said that dismissal was unacceptable to the federation because it was bound to aggravate the unemployment problem in Jordan and compound social, economic and security issues in the country.

In reviewing obstacles which impede the activities of the workers unions in Jordan and the question of dismissals resulting from the adverse effects of the Gulf crisis on Jordan, Mr. Khaddam appealed to Prime Minister Mudar Badran to help find a solution for the problem and bring a halt to the dismissals.

He also urged the government and Parliament members to intervene and ensure the return of those dismissed from their jobs.

Mr. Khaddam said that he had already submitted a memorandum to the prime minister giving details about the dismissals in a number of companies.

Mr. Khaddam called on Parliament to discuss this issue and expressed hope that the deputies would discuss workers' issues during their coming debate of a new labour law.

Mr. Khaddam's statement at the press conference followed reports about the dismissal of 39 workers employed by the Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company (APMC) in Salt.

Al Rai daily quoted the company's Managing Director Mann Shuqair as saying that every effort will be exerted towards the eventual return of the workers to their jobs.

Christian leaders denounce calls for war, urge peace

AMMAN (J.T.) — The heads of Christian communities in Jordan have issued a statement denouncing all calls for war and economic embargo on Iraq and Jordan, and urging peace-loving nations to help establish a world of peace.

The statement called on world heads of state to encourage dialogue and negotiations to resolve the questions of Palestine, Lebanon and the Gulf by peaceful means.

Following is the text of the statement: "... nations of the world aspire to live a happy life, and they love peace and justice which they seek because they guarantee their rights, dignity and progress. Yet numerous political leaderships which impose hegemony on others are now pushing the world towards a devastating war that would aggravate the sufferings of the Jordanian family and compound the Arab Nation hardships."

In view of the looming danger, we issue the following appeal:

We invoke God's help to bless us with peace because He is the source of peace and justice and He alone can save our countries from disaster. Genuine peace is a gift from God and we have to sow the seeds of peace and tender them so that they grow and bear fruit. This can be done through mutual respect, by abandoning the idea of violence, corroborating means of consultation and fostering cooperation among communities and peoples of the world, and through propagating the spirit of peace and repentance.

We call on our sons to hold prayers in our churches from today and until Jan. 15 1991, invoking God's help to defuse world tensions and remove the barriers which are now dividing the world, so that all oracles can end, and that our people can

enjoy just peace and legitimate rights.

We stand by all peace-loving peoples of the world, we condemn acts of war and the economic embargo imposed on Jordan and Iraq. We appeal to all heads of state, especially those holding power to impose war or peace, to have mercy on mankind and human life and human dignity, and to opt for constructive dialogue and objective negotiations to find solutions for the problems of Palestine, Lebanon and the Gulf that would guarantee the rights of all parties.

We hope that mankind will be able to overcome the present obstacles that are now barring the establishment of peace. We assure the Jordanian family of our close and strong solidarity with it, together forming one cohesive internal front and close ranks, steadfast in the face of challenges.

Euro-Arab parliamentary delegation arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — A Euro-Arab parliamentary delegation arrives in Jordan Wednesday on the first leg of a Middle East tour that will also include Syria and Lebanon.

The delegation will meet during its two-day visit with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent and will also hold talks with Speaker of the Upper House of Parliament

Ahmed Al Lawzi, Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament, and Information Minister and Acting Foreign Minister Ibrahim Izzeddin. The talks will deal with the situation in the region, the latest developments in the Gulf crisis and means to bolster cooperation between the Arab and European countries in different fields.

The Brussels-based Euro-Arab parliamentary organisation comprises a large number of influential political and parliamentary personalities in the European arena.

Its objective is to enhance cooperation between Arab and European countries, exchange opinions on issues of mutual interest and supporting Arab causes in European countries.

Abu Qoura honoured by Italian Red Cross

AMMAN (Petra) — Maria Fanfani, head of the women's section in the Italian Red Cross Society, Tuesday visited Dr. Ahmad Abu Qoura, president of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS), and headed him a symbolic gift for needy children in Jordan.

Mrs. Fanfani also presented Dr. Abu Qoura with a special Italian peace medal in recognition of his humanitarian efforts, especially during the evacuation crisis from the Gulf.

Dr. Abu Qoura briefed Mrs. Fanfani on JNRCS' efforts and services to the evacuees in Al Rweishid and Azraq camps over the past months, and on current preparations to face any emergency resulting from developments in the Gulf crisis.

Discussion during the meeting covered topics related to Jordan's readiness to deal with the influx of evacuees and a proposed international humanitarian conference in Amman to

discuss the roles of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies.

Mrs. Fanfani expressed readiness to attend the coming meeting which will discuss peace questions in the Middle East and the Gulf region.

The JNRCS society, in cooperation with ICRC, has set up fully equipped camps to care for the evacuees during the winter that followed the outbreak of the Gulf crisis.

House's committees discuss draft laws

AMMAN (Petra) — The Upper House of Parliament's Legal Committee held a meeting Tuesday under the chairmanship of House Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi. The committee discussed a draft amendment to the Jordanian Armed Forces' martyrs fund law for 1990.

The House's Financial Committee also met under the chairmanship of Mr. Lawzi. The committee approved a 1989 temporary amendment to the income tax law as it was referred to it from the Lower House of Parliament.

The House's Palestine and the Occupied Arab Territories Committee will meet next Monday.

The committee will meet with Director of the Foreign Ministry's Department for Palestinian Affairs Ahmad Qatanani.

The Administrative Committee of the House will meet Sunday to discuss the Civil Service Commission's policy in appointing employees in the Kingdom.

CENTRE CULTUREL FRANÇAIS AMMAN

Registration is now open at the FRENCH CULTURAL CENTRE for the following courses:

- French language courses for adults (all levels).
- Proficiency courses (Transition - Civilisation - Conversation).
- French for business.
- Preparatory courses for Sorbonne University exams.
- Arabic language courses for foreigners (Levels 1 & 2).

* All courses begin on Monday 14/1 and end on Sunday 31/3/1991. The registration will last till Sunday 13/1/1991.

* For more information, please contact the French Cultural Centre, Tel. 637009 - 636445 Amman

1st term tawjihi exams start

AMMAN (Petra) — Tawjihi examinations for the first semester of the scholastic year 1990/1991 started Tuesday in 837 examination halls in all parts of the Kingdom.

Minister of Education Abdulrahman Al Azaideh inspected the examination process in several schools in Amman and asked supervisors in the examination halls to inform the ministry of any problem that arises during the exam period to try to avoid these problems in the future.

Dr. Azaideh said the ministry had done all it could to provide a suitable atmosphere for students in the exam halls.

Director of the ministry's Examinations Department Mohammad Sayel Obeidat said students had some complaints about some questions in the Arabic language examination Tuesday.

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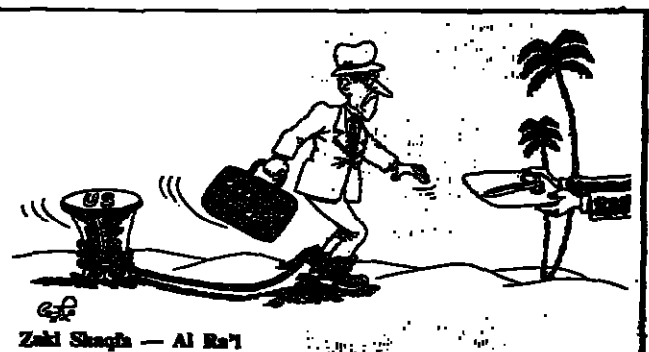
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Controversy can help!

AN INTERNATIONAL debate has suddenly erupted over the legality of the U.N. Security Council resolution 678 on the Kuwaiti conflict. This debate is timely since it may offer a way out of the stalemate in the Gulf crisis. The arguments on this issue centre on the legal import of the vote of abstention cast by China on that resolution prompting many international legal scholars to argue that the Council resolution authorising the use of force against Iraq is repugnant to the Charter of the U.N.

Article 27 of the U.N. Charter is clear on this point. It stipulates that on substantive issues the Security Council resolutions must obtain nine affirmative votes including the "concurring" votes of the permanent members of the council. There is no doubt that the word "concurring" means something "convergent" with the nine affirmative votes that are required for the adoption of the resolution. There is no way that China's abstention can be construed as tantamount to anything that is concurrent with the rest of the affirmative votes cast by the other members of the council that supported the resolution. This is a critical point that deserves further scrutiny and should be pursued by legal experts. The least that the U.N. Security Council can be expected to do in view of the problem that arose over the legality of resolution 678 is to seek a legal advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice. If the members of the council are prevented from acting on this course, the U.N. secretary general may take the initiative by calling on the international judicial tribunal to express an opinion on the legal controversy that arose because of the Chinese vote on the resolution under consideration.

As there are strong arguments in support of the proposition that resolution 678 is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the deadline set by that resolution for Iraq to complete its withdrawal from Kuwait need not and should not be pressed prior to receiving the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. This way, the international community can gain additional time to contemplate other avenues for the resolution of the Kuwaiti issue. In a sense this legal dispute is like a gift from heaven that it can save all the parties from a catastrophe in the region. Hopefully Washington can exploit this legal issue to gain extra time to reflect more on how to deal with the situation. Iraq stands also to profit from this legal situation to reconsider its position. Any extra breathing space would go a long way to help the continuing efforts to resolve the crisis peacefully. With Iraq reportedly calling for an extension of 15th of January deadline to pull out its troops from Kuwait, this legal controversy can serve as a basis for granting the requested extension by the U.N. Security Council.



Zaki Shagha - Al Ra'i

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i daily said Tuesday that the Americans and their allies deployed forces in the Gulf not for the sake of liberating Kuwait from Iraqi forces nor for giving protection to Saudi Arabia from expected Iraqi attack, but rather to destroy Iraq's military power. But the paper said that the Iraqis have proved to be steadfast and ready to wage a war against the invaders, and determined to carry the battle to the invading countries and their troops in the Gulf. President Bush and his allies realise that a war on Iraq can by no means achieve any political gains for the West, and that those bribed by Washington to back its aggression on Iraq would not benefit should war break out in the Gulf, said the paper. The invading forces realise, as do their leaderships, that any military confrontation in the Gulf would first devastate the oil fields as well as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia which served as a pretext for America to launch its present campaign, the paper noted. The Americans realise that only the British would fight against the Iraqis and that the other Europeans and the Arab forces would not fire a single shot, but they still insist on their adventure and pursue an aggressive course in dealing with Iraq, the paper added. The paper said it is more beneficial for the Americans to show respect for the international legitimacy concerning all issues in the Middle East rather than concentrating on the Gulf alone, because a war in the Gulf would not be restricted, and the conflagration could reach the enemy anywhere in the world.

Al Dustour daily Tuesday accused Washington of taking a decision to wage war on Iraq in advance and before the Baker-Aziz meeting in Geneva Wednesday. The paper said as the eyes of the world are turning towards Geneva, hoping to hear news that would defuse tension in the Gulf, the U.S. administration officials including President Bush himself have been issuing war statements and threats, displaying that America has already geared up for war and would not listen to Tareq Aziz. Washington is clearly going to Geneva with prior intention of going to war, regardless of the outcome of the Baker-Aziz meeting, noted the paper. But, it said, Iraq can by no means offer the U.S. administration capitulation, and Washington would be deceiving itself and the American people in believing that through its threats and ultimatums it can subdue the will of the peoples of the world and that through the beating of war drums it can impose its will on nations. The paper said that the Iraqis are clearly willing to offer sacrifices and ready to defend their land should the battle be imposed on them by the invaders.

Ecopolitical Forum

Mr. Bush's self-defeating war

IN economics, a project will be undertaken only if it is nationally or commercially feasible. This does not seem to be the law in politics, at least not in that of Mr. Bush. The American president has been undertaking a very risk manoeuvre of power politics that will go on straining the world economy and will either push it into deep recession or, alternatively, into devastating military flare-up which will lead to even much bitter economic harvest worldwide.

Mr. Bush started his strategy towards the Gulf crisis with a stark economic lie when he said that he was sending the American boys to the battlefield to ensure the continued flow of Arab oil to the West and to confront Iraq which, he hypothesised, was threatening that oil. Five months after the eruption of the crisis it has been proved that the world could do without the Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil. Saudi Arabia alone has made up for around 80 per cent of the lost Iraqi and Kuwaiti production and is already working on plans to hike its daily production to more than 10 million barrels in the course of the next two to three years. When that is accomplished, it will put in the market an additional amount which is more than the combined daily production of Iraq and Kuwait. This means that the world can do, forever, without the oil controlled by the Iraqi president.

As that bold lie was fading away, Mr. Bush busied himself in

engineering new excuses to justify a military strike against Iraq. If things go Mr. Bush's way, the military option will lead to a crippled Iraq, devastated (not liberated) Kuwait and a destabilised Middle East. This is hardly a good foundation stone for the new world order envisioned by Mr. Bush. It is only a recipe for a world order founded on the American naked military might. A new order will last only if it is based on justice and right.

Iraq had a grievance relating to Kuwait. After failing to rectify that grievance through negotiations and other diplomatic channels over many years, the Iraqis calculated that they can get their rights only through resort to force. Mr. Bush denies them the right to resort to force.

After Aug. 2, Mr. Bush has had a grievance against Iraq because it, according to the American administration, has violated the international law. So far, the American president has failed to rectify that grievance through all means. Now Mr. Bush is calculating that he can straighten the record only through recourse to military force, and thus is giving himself the very right which he denied to President Saddam.

It is this gap between the perceptions of the Iraqi and American presidents that should be bridged, particularly through the elimination of double standards, if the Gulf crisis is to be resolved in a peaceful manner (war will not resolve the crisis, but will only

supplant it with other forms of crises). If this involves or necessitates giving Iraq its rights, that is concessions in the jargon of certain parties, let it be. It is nonsense to talk here about aggression, aggressors and/or rewards as the American officials do. Insistence on that means inventing pretexts for war to fool the American public opinion in particular.

The war of words waged by the American officials on the eve of today's meeting between Mr. Aziz and Mr. Baker and the retortation it invited from Iraq suggest that the hot war is around the corner. It seems that nobody has thought of, or rather cared for, the costs of such a war, neither in terms of human lives nor in terms of postwar reconstruction, which will run to hundreds of billions of dollars. And this cost will be incurred by a fragile world economy which is already enfeebled by the early symptoms of recession, implying that it consequently may slide into depression. No wonder then that a British newspaper rightly called the looming Gulf war as a self-defeating war.

Certain schools of opinion maintain that if the genuine American, not Israeli, interest prevails, such war will be averted. In the final analysis, the decision of this self-defeating war will be made in Washington. Hopefully, somebody there will be sane enough, and American enough, to block that decision.

Mining of oil wells would lead to climate disaster, say scientists

By Geoffrey Leam
Environment Correspondent

WAR IN the Gulf could lead to "a global climate catastrophe," one of the world's leading authorities said yesterday.

Burning oil wells would create vast clouds of soot which could plunge much of the Middle East into darkness and cool the climate worldwide, wreaking havoc on harvests.

The warning, by Professor Paul Crutzen, Director of Atmospheric Chemistry at West Germany's prestigious Max Planck Institute, contradicts reassurances by John Wakeham, the energy secretary, on Friday.

In a statement which upset some of his own officials, Mr. Wakeham insisted that "suggestions of a global environmental disaster are entirely misplaced."

The energy secretary was attempting to counter growing scientific concern about the ecological effects of war following a seminar in London last week.

Yesterday a group of top scientists — including Dr. Joe

Prof. Crutzen is one of the few scientists to study the effects of a war on Middle East oil fields. Much of the criticism of the warnings of ecological disaster has been based on studies of fires at single oil wells, which have had relatively little effect. But scientists fear hundreds of wells could be set alight by Saddam Hussein, who is thought to have attached mines to them.

"The burning of so many oil wells could mean a global, certainly regional, climatic and environmental catastrophe," said Prof. Crutzen. "It should be made clear to the leaders involved in the conflict what the consequences can be, so that such an act of madness will not take place."

Oil from almost all Kuwait's oil fields gushes naturally to the surface, without any need for pumping. That means that once a well had been set alight it would continue to blaze like a giant bunsen burner. Scientists estimate that 10 million barrels of oil could be burned a day.

Top Jordanian officials believe 400 wells could be set on fire, causing giant infernos that would be extremely difficult to extinguish.

They say this could raise temperatures in the area to more than 160F, making it impossible for firefighters to

get near. Gales would sweep the area as air was sucked in to feed the flames, as happened in the firestorm in Dresden in the World War II. The scientists and oil industry sources agree it could take a year to extinguish all the fires after hostilities ceased.

Prof. Crutzen has calculated that burning 10 million barrels of oil a day would produce 620,000 square miles of dense black smoke every 24 hours.

These clouds would blacken the skies of the area, allowing almost no sun to get through. This could devastate agriculture, also in Iraq, so that Saddam "would be the first to suffer."

The heat of the fires could fling huge amounts of soot into the stratosphere, where it could spread around the northern hemisphere — which covers North America, Europe and Asia — reducing sunlight for months or years and cooling the climate.

He said there was a risk of "major climatic effects for a large part of the northern hemisphere."

The International Council of Scientific Unions has estimated that similar clouds of smoke could reduce global temperatures by several degrees centigrade, disrupt the African and Asian monsoons, and devastate world harvests.

The recipe for an ecological catastrophe

- 1 10 million barrels a day of oil would be burnt off if Kuwaiti wells mined
- 2 Rise in air temperature to 160F (66C)
- 3 Huge winds as fires like giant bunsen burners suck in oxygen
- 4 Pall of smoke would darken skies for weeks causing crop failures which would hit Iraq hardest
- 5 Soot rising into stratosphere could lead to cooling of global climate



Dr. Theodore Taylor, a leading U.S. nuclear weapons scientist, warned yesterday of a "very real danger" that electro-magnetic radiation caused by military communications equipment could accidentally cause explosions in nuclear weapons in the Gulf, scattering plutonium over wide areas. Chemical and biological weapons were even more likely to explode in this way, he said.

Dr. Taylor said the Gulf was probably "the most intense electromagnetic environment" created in peacetime, and that if war broke out, the risks would increase at least a hundredfold.

Gulf war would put the squeeze on Japan's Kaifu

By Linda Sieg
Reuters

TOKYO — If there is war in the Gulf, Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu will be squeezed between U.S. pressure to do more than just help to foot the bill and domestic demands to stay out of foreign wars, political analysts said on Tuesday.

"Under the very weak leadership of Mr. Kaifu, Japan will not be able to do anything even if war breaks out," said Seizaburo Sato, a University of Tokyo political science professor with close ties to the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

A lukewarm response from Japan, coming at a time when Washington already looks set to turn up the heat on Tokyo's trade policies, would almost certainly spark a barrage of anti-Japanese rhetoric in the United States.

"It will certainly create a problem if the war is in any way protracted," said Robert Orr, director of the Stanford Centre, "you're going to see Japan-bashing like you've never seen before. It will supersede any of the trade issues because it will be very, very real for the American people."

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is due to meet Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz in Geneva on Wednesday for last-ditch talks before next week's U.N. deadline for Baghdad to give up Kuwait.

In the five months since Iraq invaded Kuwait, Japan has debated what its role should be in resolving the crisis, but so far has limited that role to helping to fund the operation.

After some delay, Tokyo pledged \$4 billion for the U.S.-led multinational force in the Gulf and to aid Middle East countries badly hit by the United Nations trade sanctions imposed against Iraq after its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. Pressure from opposition

parties, the public and even from inside his own party forced Kaifu last November to withdraw a bill that would have opened the way to send up to 2,000 soldiers to the Gulf in a non-combat role.

Opposition parties said the bill violated the anti-war constitution. Japan's Asian neighbours also opposed the bill, saying it would lead to a revival of militarism.

Some U.S. congressmen, such as Democratic House leader Richard Gephardt, have already criticised Japan for failing to shoulder a fair share of the financial burden in the crisis.

If war erupts, Japan would certainly give Washington diplomatic support and would probably increase its financial contribution to the multinational force. Tokyo might also become involved in efforts to rescue refugees, analysts said.

The Foreign ministry said on Tuesday that Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama would go to Washington on Jan. 13 and stay until Jan. 17 to meet Baker. The fact that Baker agreed to meet Nakayama at such a busy time showed the United States wanted to step up cooperation with Japan in the Gulf crisis, foreign ministry spokesman Taizo Watanabe told reporters.

Kaifu's weak domestic political position and a strong public aversion to military involvement overseas mean the government is unlikely to go any further.

Although Kaifu has said he would submit a revised bill on international peace cooperation to parliament, such a move would be impossible until at least April, after the budget for fiscal 1991/92 is passed, Sato said.

"We will propose a new cooperation bill, but if something happens, it will be too late and if nothing happens it will be of no use," Tetsuo Kondo, an LDP member of

parliament, told Reuters. "For a new bill, we have to get consensus."

Watanabe said Japan would not be a mere bystander if war broke out. "The new legal framework may not be ready in time. We will do what we can," he said.

Political analysts said many Japanese do not see a Gulf war as having a major direct impact on their country, despite the fact that Japan relies on imports for nearly all its oil, and

some 70 per cent of those imports come from the Middle East.

"They just don't think it's their problem... they feel it's an American problem," Orr said.

Domestic critics of Japan's policy say Tokyo is failing to assume global diplomatic responsibilities equal to its economic stature.

"It's symptomatic," said Tokyo University's Sato. "The

Japanese people, including the prime minister, are not ready to take a bold initiative commensurate with their economic capacity."

"Japan, though an economic superpower, has neither the will nor the muscle to rule the world," wrote Nomura Research Institute chief counselor Yoshio Suzuki in a recent article.

"But this does not excuse it, however, from watching the Gulf crisis from the sidelines,

contributing nothing but money," wrote Suzuki, former Bank of Japan executive director.

"We should remind ourselves of how much our economy relies on oil from the Middle East. While taking care not to provoke worries about Japanese military might in our Asian neighbours, we should be developing longer-term policies to lighten the U.S. military burden," Suzuki said.

LETTERS

A beacon of peace

We in the Middle East, should be extremely happy. For years we have looked to the West for guidance. They have shown us the path to democracy and development. Why then has it taken so long for us to realise that we have the perfect ideological guide right in our own backyard? Yes, we must look to Israel.

For four decades now this tiny state has laboured and toiled against all odds, entirely on its own, to build a great nation founded on a vision of justice and freedom for all. Let us be on our guard against those with a wicked tongue, that would put Israel's success down to the five billion dollars it receives annually from its co-democrats across the Atlantic. Perish the thought.

Israel is a small peace loving country — and a generous one. When it was founded, it insisted that its Palestinian guests, if they wished to stay, should have an Israeli passport. They even relieved the

Palestinians of those onerous and inalienable rights that accompany citizenship. The Palestinians need not even choose their government. Israel, as ever, has volunteered. Not all people would be so welcoming.

Today, forty years on, it is still as morally minded as ever. With the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli occupied territories, which have been under military protection for 22 years, Israel shows that it spares no effort to protect us all from evil. Some bloody minded folk would have us believe that this so called uprising is a spontaneous surge of popular feeling against two decades of occupation by a hostile army. Ignore them, and take note of the Israeli Prime Minister's words. We know that these insurgents are terrorists, who are disguised as women and children incited only by a feeling of hate for the state of Israel. They want

none of those things that civilised people cherish especially peace, freedom, justice, and self-determination. Prime Minister Shamir should know. After all, he was the leader of the group that "blew up" the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, in 1947, killing over ninety British officers. He is well studied in the tactics of the freedom fighter.

Mr. Shamir states clearly, and repeatedly, that Israel will never give up an inch of the West Bank — part of the Biblical land of Israel. We cannot but admire his determination to devote whatever resources are necessary to stand by the so-called Palestinians and excise from them the evil thoughts that they harbour — no doubt through no fault of their own.

Israel takes its unwavering fight against the terrorists as far as it possibly can. While one such bad soul was cunningly sleeping in his family home in Tunis, a deceptive

3000 kilometres from Israel, an Israeli "foreign relations" team burst into his bedroom, showering him with gifts of peace. This man, a senior member of the PLO, had indulged in any activities contrary to the interests of Israel for over six months. A reformed character, he now rests in peace.

Israel, the deprived orphan of the world, constantly living under threat harbour only the nuclear weapons necessary for its defence and has yet again demonstrated to us its quest for peace. It has launched a satellite, to watch, to guard that not one person should pervert the course to freedom and justice for all human beings.

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Pressure on Bush grows as Jan. 15 approaches

By Jacqueline Frank
Reuter

WASHINGTON — There is no compelling military reason for the United States to launch an attack against Iraq on Jan. 16, but analysts say political pressure will force President George Bush to decide on a military course soon after the U.N. deadline is passed.

The U.N. resolution orders Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to withdraw troops from Kuwait by Jan. 15, although the exact timing of the deadline has remained unclear.

Military and Middle East analysts told Reuters the timing of military action and the type of force used could vary widely.

"As long as there is a clear indication the United States is going to use military force it does not matter when in the military context," said Marvin Feuerwerker, senior strategic fellow of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Bush would have a window until late February or early March to launch an air and ground attack. After that, desert heat would severely hinder ground force action but would not inhibit an air strike.

But former U.S. Defence Secretary Harold Brown, who has favoured giving economic sanctions time to work against Iraq, said Bush has made so much of the Jan. 15 date that he will have to act within a couple of weeks.

"Militarily he doesn't have any stricture, but I have been one who felt he should give sanctions more time to work," Brown told Reuters.

Brown said considerations of public perception and international politics, not military strategy, may force Bush to act.

"If he doesn't do anything in the following few weeks, that will suggest he's lost resolve," Brown said.

By the deadline, the United

States is expected to have some 400,000 troops in the region — on land in Saudi Arabia and at sea in the Gulf and waters around the Arabian Peninsula.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has amassed 530,000 troops in southern Iraq and Kuwait, and has said he has the ability to conscript another 500,000.

U.S. forces, however, could be a further negotiating tool for Bush to impress upon Saddam the U.S. and allied determination to see an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

"It can be an air action. This would cause people to think some," Brown said. An air strike against the Iraqi air force and missiles is probably being considered in lieu of leading off with an all-out ground, naval and air action, he said.

Defence analyst Barry Bleckman said the air-strike option would give Bush time to convince Saddam to retreat without committing U.S. forces to a costly and bloody ground conflict.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Despite the threats of action if the deadline passes with no reaction from Saddam, Bleckman said "there's nothing compelling him (Bush) to act on the 16th."

"He doesn't want to be in a position, where if it turns out badly, he was forced militarily to take an action when reports from commanders in the field were that the troops were not ready," said Bleckman of Defence Forecasts Inc.

Iraqi ambassador to the United States Mohammad Al Mashat, speaking in a U.S. television interview, said the sabre-rattling would not force Iraq to withdraw.

"We will never do it under threats and intimidation," he said.

Regent

(Continued from page 1)

general and on Jordan in particular.

"Falls of black smoke resulting from a breakout of war will cover an area of 620,000 miles," he said. "It could reach South Asia and prevent monsoon rains, thus causing tens of millions of people to starve as a result of heating up and the lack of rain," he added.

The Crown Prince said Security Council Resolution 660, the first issued by the council on the Gulf crisis, should take into consideration Iraq's initiative of Aug. 12 calling for finding solutions to all problems of the region.

Prince Hassan stressed the need for finding a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis and praised a statement by the Saudi leadership which highlighted the importance of initiating Iraqi-Kuwaiti dialogue.

Prince Hassan also referred to the efforts made by His Majesty King Hussein to find a solution to the crisis.

He pointed out that the prime beneficiary of the crisis is the arms merchants and said that predictions about a rise in the oil

prices within the next few months will certainly lead to the disappearance of states and nations in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia.

The harassment of ships heading for Aqaba, Prince Hassan said, was prompted by Jordan's principled stand towards the Gulf crisis.

Attending the lecture were the presidents of Yarmouk and JUST universities, teaching staff from both universities, local governors, heads of local councils and representatives of various unions and societies.

Earlier the Crown Prince met with the presidents of the Yarmouk and JUST universities and stressed the need for enhancing cooperation between the two universities and Ubrid's industrial estate. The Crown Prince called for promoting self-reliance in all educational institutions through enhancing interaction between scientific research and industry, particularly during and in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis.

Prince Hassan urged universities to start thinking of the future along these lines and to promote team spirit amongst their students.

West expects reprisals in case of war

By Jonathan Wright
Reuter

DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia

Iraq has given the clearest signal yet that it would encourage attacks on U.S. and other Western targets across the world if war broke out in the Gulf.

President Saddam Hussein, in a speech broadcast on Monday, said the battle would extend throughout the Arab World and wherever Arabs lived.

"The theatre of our operations (includes) every struggle and fighter whose hand can reach out to harm ... aggressors in the whole world," he told his top army commanders.

Western diplomats in the Arab World said that in the first days of any conflict they would expect a sudden release of anger, expressed in demonstrations and attacks on symbols such as embassies, airline offices and cultural centres.

Western military sources say the main specific threat would come from two Baghdad-based Palestinian groups — the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) of Mohammed Abbas (Abu Abbas) and the Fatah Revolutionary Council of Abu Nidal, real name Sabri Banna.

Western diplomats said the greatest long-threat, however, was probably posed by a

myriad of Arab groups angered by U.S.-led military intervention in the Gulf — especially if Iraq crashed to humiliating defeat.

"It's a very real danger. If the post-crisis arrangements are unsatisfactory, instability and violence could run and run," said one diplomat.

Iraq's own personnel, such as embassy staff and airline employees, are already under close surveillance in Western countries but do not have the same experience as the two Palestinian groups in clandestine operations, they say.

Britain expelled eight Iraqi embassy staff and 67 civilians on Thursday, citing national security and Iraqi threats.

The PLF is firmly established in Baghdad, where Abu Abbas spends most of his time. He masterminded the 1985 hijacking of the Italian cruise liner Achille Lauro in the Mediterranean.

Although a constituent part of Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), his group takes orders from the Iraqi leadership, PLO sources say.

Its last operation was an attempted attack on the Israeli beach last May. Timed to coincide with an Arab summit in Baghdad, the raid sabotaged a PLO-American dialogue and indirectly undermined the main hope for progress towards Middle East peace.

But the PLF suffered a serious setback at the end of October when Libya quietly expelled scores of its members to Iraq, and Lebanon, apparently at the PLO's request.

Abu Nidal's organisation, which the U.S. State Department has described as the world's most dangerous terrorist network, has more experience than any other of attacking civilians in Europe.

The United States holds it responsible for attacks at Rome and Vienna airports, a synagogue in Istanbul and the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador in London in 1982.

But the FRC is at a low ebb in its fortunes. It was split by dissent in late 1989. Libya, previously its main base, has frozen its operations abroad and mainstream PLO forces have reduced its military strength in south Lebanon.

The PLO itself, despite its history of revolutionary violence and its close alliance with Iraq, is unlikely to attack Western targets during a war in the Gulf, Arab diplomats said.

Arafat, the PLO chairman, said in Baghdad on Monday that the organisation would stand alongside Iraq in any war.

But Arafat puts high value on good relations with the European Community, which the PLO sees as the best

possible counterweight to U.S. bias towards Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Some Palestinians, who are automatically Iraqi citizens, would certainly fight in the Iraqi army but a PLO official in Tunis said on Sunday the organisation had not even discussed formal participation in a Gulf war.

In Tunisia, where public opinion is overwhelmingly pro-Iraqi, usually peaceful citizens have been heard to threaten individual acts of violence if war breaks out.

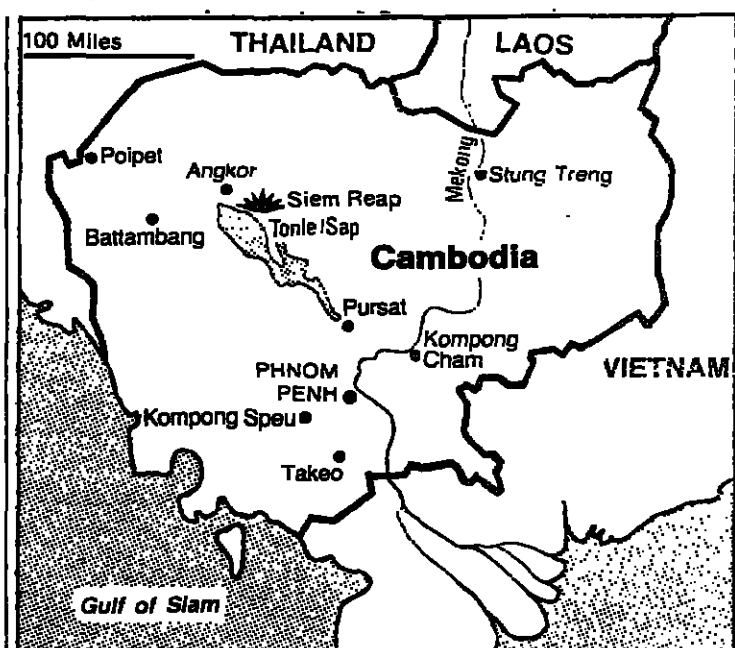
Saddam referred to these sentiments in his speech on Sunday night. The war exists "in Algeria, Jordan, Egypt and inside every heart and conscience of any Syrian" he said.

One of the Iraqis expelled from Britain said Iraq would not need to incite violence.

"All Western countries will have targets to be hit. Every Arab person living abroad will do that. It is not a matter of Iraq pushing them, it is a matter of belief," he said.

Many European countries have advised their citizens to leave Jordan and Sudan before Jan. 15, the U.N. deadline for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

One question which remains unanswered is how Arab governments will handle the outburst of anger, which could turn against them.



As Gulf war looms, time runs out for Cambodia too

By Angus MacSwan
Reuter

BANGKOK — As the United Nations focuses on its deadline for war in the Gulf, its efforts to bring peace to Cambodia look unlikely to stop a new round of fighting.

The Phnom Penh government and its guerrilla opponents have been beating the drums of war since a round of peace talks in Paris ended inconclusively just before Christmas.

Peacebrokers have given warning that the U.N. peace plan, drafted with unprecedented consensus by the five major powers on the U.N. Security Council, is the only hope to end the turmoil that has plagued Cambodia in shifting permutations for 20 years.

Should the United States and its allies go to war against Iraq after Jan. 15 the deadline the U.N. has set for Baghdad to quit Kuwait, international concern will drift from the problems of a small country of eight million people, diplomats in Bangkok said.

"The Cambodians must realise there is not an indefinite time limit on this offer," said one.

In recent months whole villages have trudged into U.N.-aided refugee camps along the Thai border as the rival armies blast away at each other with Chinese and Soviet-supplied weapons.

Heng Samrin, president of the Vietnam-allied government in control of most of Cambodia, said on Saturday his army would carry the war to the guerrillas to gain a decisive victory.

Phnom Penh had made enough concessions at the negotiating table, he said.

Khieu Samphan, nominal leader of Pol Pot's radical Khmer Rouge, at new year urged his guerrilla forces to step up their attacks. They threatened to attack Battambang city, lying on major transport routes in western Cambodia, and told its citizens to evacuate.

Clashes have occurred from the Thai border to north of the vast Tonle Sap Lake, through the southern central province of Kompong Speu and in Kompong Thom, north of the capital.

Phnom Penh radio last week

reported firefights with Khmer Rouge guerrillas in Kompong Cham, east of the Mekong River that drifts south through the capital.

These aid credence to foreign aid workers' theories that the Khmer Rouge is trying to close a noose round the city, keeping open a military option if it does not get what it wants by political means.

The other two groups in the tripartite guerrilla coalition, the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) and forces loyal to exiled Prince Norodom Sihanouk — weaker militarily but supported by Western governments — are mostly bottled up along the Western and Northern border.

The KPNLF failed to dislodge government troops from the former outpost of svay chek in December.

But the Sihanoukists, using two captured T-54 tanks, took the Tonle Sap firebase on Dec. 17 and aim to push south now that the roads have dried out following the Monsoon rains.

The brunt of the fighting will still be borne by the Khmer Rouge, which has been trying to build support and establish supply lines in rural areas while the government has held the towns and the many highways, military analysts say.

Whether, despite its threats, it has the power or inclination to seize a big city, is open to question.

"In purely military terms the Khmer Rouge threat has clearly been overrated," wrote American Cambodia expert Stephen Hedder in a recent paper.

"It is still not a position to mount the kind of strategic offensive ... it launched successfully in 1975".

The Khmer Rouge's future is still at issue in the peace plan, which aims to bring the guerrillas in from the jungles to the city and to hold elections under U.N. auspices.

Phnom Penh says this will reward the radical communists whose 1975-79 rule oversaw the deaths of one million Cambodians before it was ended by a Vietnamese invasion.

It says there is a risk the Khmer Rouge could grab power again.

King

(Continued from page 1)

The King is accompanied on the visit by Her Majesty Queen Noor, Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem, the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh and Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was also in Bonn Tuesday, but it was not immediately known whether the King was seeing him. Baker was to fly to Geneva late Tuesday for talks Wednesday with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz.

A report from Luxembourg, which holds the rotating presidency of the European Community (EC), said the King was due there Wednesday for talks on the Gulf crisis. Then he is expected to fly to Italy.

Paris

(Continued from page 1)

who gives the impression of exceptional calm and who seems perfectly aware that war would be a truly terrible ordeal for his people."

"He seems perfectly aware of the stakes but has a sort of determination that in my opinion justifies a decision to be explored," said Vauzelle, Mitterrand's former spokesman.

Vauzelle briefed Mitterrand on his Baghdad visit immediately after returning to Paris Sunday.

"We should wait and do nothing to impede our American friends," Vauzelle said, but if Baker and Aziz did not find a solution there would be six days left to avert war.

Bush, in televised remarks to nations in the anti-Iraq coalition, ruled out any compromise over U.N. demands that Iraq pull out by Jan. 15.

"The purpose of declaring this deadline was to give Saddam fair warning: Withdraw from Kuwait without condition and without delay, or at any time, or after that date, face a coalition ready and willing to meet any military challenge to its

force the will of the United Nations," he said.

"It is a deadline for Saddam Hussein to choose — to choose peace over war," he added.

Bush urged his allies to resist pressure to provide Iraq with a face-saving formula.

"The danger of this course should be clear to all," he said. "The price of peace now on Saddam's terms will be paid many times over a greater sacrifice, in suffering."

In Geneva, Aziz said he had come in good faith and with an open mind for talks with Baker.

"It is premature to comment on those talks at this moment but I would like to say that I have come in good faith. I am open-minded and I am ready to conduct positive, constructive talks with Secretary Baker," he said on arrival in Geneva.

Expulsion

(Continued from page 1)

against them.

After crossing, Qanu, a teacher, told reporters: "We urge the use of arms against the Jews. Israel should be wiped out and an Islamic state should be established in Palestine."

Alami, an engineer, said: "Hamas seeks to increase resistance and (armed) operations against the occupation... attacks will continue until the will of the Palestinian people to establish a state is achieved."

Lidawi, a college student, said: "Israel does not take into consideration any humanitarian action... the expulsion is a political decision."

Tuesday's expulsions increased to 62 the number of activists expelled by the Israeli authorities during 37 months of the Palestinian revolt in the Israel-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) issued a statement in Tel Aviv criticising the expulsions of the four Palestinians.

"We would like to see a peaceful settlement and if one could

the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The convention prohibited the forced transfer of civilians from an occupied area for any reason, it said.

Geneva

(Continued from page 1)

have enough time to see... people killing each other in the region and consuming their military resources and then Israel will harvest the results as it likes.

"Israel is going to be involved in the conflict, in the hostilities, from the very beginning."

He added, with a laugh, that Iraq does not recognise the U.N. deadline of Jan. 15 as the date for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

"Well, I don't think that there will be a change from now to the 15th. We are not going to yield to pressure. We are not going to act in an atmosphere of threat."

Aziz said Baker should not come to Geneva threatening war but should arrive in a spirit that could lead to peace.

"If they (the United States) would like to avoid (war) and reach a peaceful settlement they have to prepare themselves — they have to come to Geneva in a spirit which creates the possibility of bringing about peace."

But Baker was headed for Geneva with an assertion that the U.S. had the full support of the international community if it launched a war against Iraq.

"The international community is very solidly unified in the view that there must be full implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions," Baker said after meeting German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher in Bonn.

Baker, who began the day in London and made a three-hour stopover in Paris, made no statement after meeting Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

"I think it is important that we all do what we can to convince (Iraqi leader) Saddam Hussein that the international community is indeed serious when it says that, in the absence of a withdrawal, force might be used," he said.

"We would all prefer a peaceful settlement and if one could

occur before midnight on the 15th, we'd be delighted," he told journalists.

In other Gulf developments: — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said meanwhile that an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait is not enough.

"If Iraq withdraws from Kuwait but no arrangements are made to remove the Iraqi threat to the region, they (the U.S.-led coalition) will have achieved nothing," foreign ministry officials quoted Levy as telling Israeli reporters Tuesday.

The United States has demanded only an Iraqi withdrawal, but Israel wants Iraq disarmed or constrained by buffer zones or international supervision of its arsenal in the post-Gulf crisis Middle East, Israeli diplomatic sources said.

"Any political arrangement (ending the Gulf crisis) calls for several precautions to deprive Iraq from using conventional or non-conventional weapons," Levy said, suggesting international supervision.

— Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said the situation in the Gulf was "very dangerous," but hoped the Iraqi-U.S. talks would be positive.

— Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Petrovsky renewed calls for diplomatic efforts to avert a Gulf war during meetings with the German and Canadian ambassadors, TASS reported.

— Finance minister from the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council has postponed a meeting scheduled Wednesday to discuss aid to countries affected by the Gulf crisis, the Omani News Agency reported.

— Turkish President Turgut Ozal, whose country is the only NATO member state bordering Iraq, said the odds for war in the Gulf were fifty-fifty.

— British military base authorities and their Cyprus counterparts intensified security against incidents linked to the Gulf crisis.

— President Corason Aquino, who has survived six coup attempts, said Tuesday she was put the Philippine armed forces on alert in case of possible threats to her government if a war breaks out in the Gulf.

— Algerian tour operators have suspended pilgrim trips to holy places in Saudi Arabia as a result of the Gulf crisis, travel agents said.

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Jordan Times

Second Hungarian breaks world record at swimming championships

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Tamas Darnyi recorded Hungary's second world record in two days at the World Swimming Championships Tuesday, while the heavily favoured U.S. team was shut out.

Darnyi shaved 2.39 seconds off his own world mark in the men's 400-metre individual medley, lowering it to four minutes, 12.36 seconds. He joined countryman Ross in the 100 breaststroke as a world record-setter at the championships.

At the only consolation for the United States was an American record of 4:15.21 by Eric Nemesnik as he chased Darnyi home.

The United States did not win its second gold medal of the championships, when twins Karen and Sarah Josephson won the synchronised swimming duet with a world best of 199.762 points.

In the men's 3-metre springboard diving, Tan Liangde of China led qualifiers with 637.08 points. Albin Killat of Germany trailed the Olympic silver medalist with 608.37 points.

Olympic gold medalist Anthony Nesty pipped Michael Gross for the men's 100 metres butterfly title.

Nesty, the first person from Surinam to win an Olympic med-

al with his upset victory at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, finished powerfully to edge the towering German by 0.02 seconds in a championship record time of 53.29 seconds.

Gross, returning for a final fling after temporarily quitting following the 1988 Olympics, led clearly at the turn from American Matt Biondi but could not deny Nesty's challenge on the second length.

Gross clocked 53.31 for the silver, also inside the world championship mark of 53.54 set by American Pablo Morales in 1986. It was his 10th World Championship medal.

Viacheslav Kulikov of the Soviet Union, who celebrated his 20th birthday Monday, took the Bronze in 53.74.

Olympic and World Championship silver medalist Biondi finished sixth in 53.97.

Gross, who won the event at the 1984 Olympics, was double world champion at 200 freestyle and 200 butterfly in both 1982 and 1986 and seeks an unprecedented third 200 butterfly triumph Saturday.

Sixteen-year-old Hayley Lewis gave home fans something to cheer by upstaging American Janet Evans to win Australia's first title of the championship in the women's 200 metres freestyle.

Lewis, denied a gold medal by 0.01 seconds in Monday's 400 metres individual medley, emphatically made amends and triumphed over her old idol Evans by 0.19 seconds in a thrilling finish.

Lewis, who won five gold medals at the Commonwealth Games in Auckland last January, responded to the clamours of the crowd to win in two minutes 0.48 seconds.

Evans and Denmark's Mette Jacobsen both touched within half a second of the Australian for silver and bronze.

American Nicole Haislett, winner of Monday's 100 freestyle, was the fastest qualifier but had to settle for fourth in the final in 2:01.13.

Lewis almost failed to reach the final, squeezing in as the slowest qualifier and starting in the outside lane eight.

Japan's Suzu Chiba, who was edged out of the final, raced away with the B final in 2:00.58 — a time which would have given her the silver medal in the main event.

Yelena Volkova gave the Soviet Union their first gold of the championships, winning the women's 200 metres breaststroke with a storming finish.

European bronze medalist

Volkova denied Australia a second gold Tuesday, beating Linley Frame, the fastest qualifier, by nearly half a second.

Volkova swam in an outside lane after returning the second-slowest qualifying time, improving dramatically in the final to win in two minutes 29.53 seconds.

Frame took the silver in 2:30.02 and early pace-setter Jana Doerries of Germany the bronze in 2:30.14.

German Alexandra Haenel led for much of the race but faded to fifth on the last length.

Gross anchored the newly-united German team to victory in the men's 4x200 metres freestyle relay final for his 11th medal in three World Championships.

Gross resisted the challenge of American Doug Gjertsen to lead his team home in 7:13.50, inside the 7:15.91 World Championship mark set by East Germany in 1986.

The East Germans beat Gross and his West German team mates into second place at the last World Championships in Madrid by just 0.05 seconds.

This time a combined German quartet linked Peter Sitt, Stefan Pfeiffer and Gross of the West with Steffen Zesner of the East. The United States were second in 7:14.87 and Italy third in 7:17.18.

Johnson will not recapture old speed — former coach

TORONTO (R) — Ben Johnson, who returns to international sprinting Friday after a two-year drug ban, will not recapture his old speed, according to his former coach Charlie Francis.

Francis coached Johnson for 12 years before the Canadian was positively doped tested for steroids after winning the 1988 Seoul Olympic 100 metres final. Johnson, now 29, runs over 50 metres at the Hamilton Indoor Games Friday.

"Ben's not going to be able to run clean as fast as he ran before," Francis said in an interview.

"He can still run world class times. But can he break his old world records?"

"If I thought he could do that without steroids, why the hell would I give anybody drugs in the first place?"

Francis said he thought Johnson would still feel some effects of the steroids, used to help build up muscle and speed recovery from injury.

"You don't lose everything you gain from steroids, that's for sure," Francis said. "But the benefits would be very small by now."

Francis said he had timed

Johnson in training recently and figured he could still clock 6.55 seconds for the 60 metres. Johnson was stripped of his world record of 6.41 seconds by the International Amateur Athletic Federation at its 1989 congress.

"Ben hasn't forgotten everything he learned in 12 years," Francis said. "I've seen flashes of his old self."

Johnson's current coach, American Loren Seagrave, unsurprisingly disagrees with Francis.

"I think (a world indoor record) is achievable in the first season," Seagrave said. "I think the outdoor (100 metres) record takes more time to groove in. I've always felt you don't need steroids to be at the top of the world."

But the last word remains with Francis, who believes other leading sprinters still use steroids. "The number one goal for Ben now, given that he has one hand tied behind his back because he's not using steroids, is to maximise his income," Francis said.

Johnson has said that he was "edgy and excited" as he prepares for his first competition in 27 months.

"The last two or three days I've felt very edgy and very excited that I have a future to look forward to again," Johnson said at a brief news conference following his daily workout.

Johnson, who turned 29 in December, is entered in the 50-metre dash where he will face stiff competition from a highly-ranked trio of American sprinters — Andre Cason, Mike Marsh and Dennis Mitchell.

"Right now I'm feeling good. I'm really happy to be racing again," said Johnson, who would not predict the outcome of the race.

Johnson set a 50-metre world indoor record of 5.5 seconds in 1987 and was unbeaten indoors between 1985 and 1988.

He has passed six drug tests since he was stripped of his Olympic 100 metres gold medal, the latest a few weeks ago when doping control officers from the International Amateur Athletic Federation turned up in Toronto to administer an unannounced test.

Johnson admitted he felt a lot of pressure as he prepares for competition.

"So far I can handle it, but Loren will help take the (media)



Ben Johnson pressure off me." Seagrave refused to disclose Johnson's practice times but said: "His training times show he is competitive." The coach said winning the first race was not important.

Complaints add to Real Madrid's woes

By Reuters

COMPLAINTS by striker Sebastian Losada about his treatment at the hands of temporary coach Alfredo Di Stefano added to struggling Real Madrid's woes Tuesday.

Losada was angry at being left on the bench last weekend when the club, trailing Spanish league leaders Barcelona by eight points, won 2-0 at Sporting De Gijon.

Losada, an impressive striker who has been little used since he was signed in 1988, said he was beginning to look elsewhere. His talents are admired by Barcelona's Dutch coach Johan Cruyff, among others.

"I have to think that football does not start and finish at Real Madrid. There are other teams. If there is one where I can play and be happy..." said Losada.

Real Madrid players have offered their support to chairman Ramon Mendoza, who is seeking a vote of confidence from shareholders because of the team's poor results this season.

Mendoza, a lawyer and businessman, took over Spain's top club in 1985 and after a re-election in 1988 was due to carry on until 1992, but the club's failure to win more than nine of its 17 games this season has brought him under fire.

The club said Monday Mendoza and his management team would offer to resign at a shareholders' meeting later this month. They could then seek a vote of confidence at new elections to the board.

Real goalkeeper Paco Buyo said the chairman, who is popular among players, had the team's full support. "The chairman has our complete confidence. What he does is fine with us," he said.

In Italy, controversy rages over refereeing standards after a rash of dubious decisions Sunday.

Under the headline "football hits back — this will not do, referees," leading sports daily Gazzetta dello Sport published a straw poll of leading managers Tuesday, who are united in calling for a more even application of this season's tough new rules against foul play.

"We need to be certain and above all we need to see that all are equal in front of the law," Sampdoria manager Vujadin Boskov.

Sampdoria's Roberto Mancini and Torino's Silvano Benedetti were sent off for fighting Sunday.

There was controversy, too, in the match between Juventus and Napoli which saw the expulsion of Napoli goalkeeper Giovanni Galli.

"The referee's error was clear for all to see," said Napoli manager

Alberto Bigon. "Galli should not have been sent off. I think it's a problem of application of the laws."

There were also heated arguments and protests in the match between Inter and Genoa where Inter were awarded a penalty after 25 minutes and Genoa had a goal disallowed.

Hans Dorfner, who won seven caps for West Germany but could not secure a first-team place at Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich, has been transferred to Nuremberg for more than two million marks (\$1.3 million).

"The first thing is to try and help them avoid relegation," said the midfielder who will return to the club he first started for from 1984-86 before moving to Munich where he won three championships.

Nuremberg are languishing second from bottom of the Bundesliga with only three victories in 16 games at the halfway point of the season.

Romania's international midfielder Daniel Timofte joined German Bundesliga side Bayer Uerdingen Monday.

Timofte, previously with Dinamo Bucharest, signed a contract with Uerdingen until June 1994.

In England Brian McClair settled Manchester United's first night nerves with a 73rd minute winner as the holders began their defence of the English F.A.

Cup with a 2-1 victory over Queen's Park Rangers Monday.

Scotland international McClair pounced for his 12th goal of the season after collecting a pass from Mark Hughes. The goal followed a surging run by Captain Bryan Robson.

It gave United their expected victory over depleted first division strugglers Rangers, but their passage into the fourth round and a home tie with near neighbours Bolton was anything but smoothing.

Hughes volleyed the holders ahead in the 18th minute as they made a storming start. But United, beaten only once in 16 games, let Rangers off the hook.

The London side, missing several key players through illness and injury, battled back and took advantage of an error by United keeper Les Sealey to equalise five minutes before halftime.

Sealey left his line in a bid catch Andy Sinton's cross from the left. But he failed to get to the ball first, leaving Danny Maddix to head over him into an empty net.

Minor league Woking, who caused the biggest upset of the third round Saturday by winning 4-2 away to second division West Bromwich, have asked the Football Association for permission to play their home fourth round tie against Everton at the Liverpool club's Goodison Park ground.

Andy Capp

Peanuts

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

HARRIS 12-13

"Heck, you're not so old. If you were a tortoise you'd still be in diapers!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SNOWI

LERIN

CAJEKT

IPCINC

Answer here: A O O O O IN THE

Saturday's Jumbles: ARMOR CANAL RATION LAUNCH

Answer: How most things are sold in a supermarket — A LA "CART"

THE Daily Crossword by Martha J. De Witt

ACROSS

1 Arose

6 Sound of laughter

10 Moist

14 Sphere of action

15 Son of Zeus

16 Inter

17 Truman's birthplace

18 Impermanent

20 Mountain

21 Actor Vigoda

23 Little fingers

24 Cloth from mulberry

26 Feel sorry

27 Collided

30 Error

34 "What — God wrought!"

35 Alteration

37 Snitch

38 Cuckoo

39 — de guerre

40 "Sole"

41 Durocher and Gern

43 Granted

45 Location

46 Doghouses

48 Singing shes

50 Resentment

51 Suck

52 Makashi

56 Sci. up

57 Be sick

59 Still for thing

62 Javelin

64 Nautical term

65 Robert

66 Show host

67 Give

68 Carou

69 Textile workers

DOWN

1 Festive occasion

2 Of the mouth

3 Allurement

4 "Fable"

5 Quene's maiden

5 Signature

6 Flourish

7 Abhor

8 Have being

9 Fiber plant

10 Headache remedy

11 Most gloomy

12 Jail

13 Thick mud

14 Yields

15 Burden

16 Fighting Max

17 Bar wood

18 — up (score)

19 ind. royalty

20 Sand hills

21 Some actors

22 Sobriety

23 TSE name

24 Schemes

25 Drowse

26 Pruned

27 Turned fair

28 IOU e.g.

29 Sault — Marie

30 Hence

49 Signed, and delivered

50 Wound

51 Far. pref.

52 August

53 Fabric surface

56 Look

57 Bakery worker

58 Sediment

59 Zolder

60 A Carter

Economy

JORDAN TIMES, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 1991

Banks cut lending to E. Europe and Third World in early 1990

BASLE, Switzerland (R) — Banks in leading industrialised countries substantially cut their lending to eastern Europe and the Third World but raised lending to developed nations in the first half of 1990, the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) said Tuesday.

Overall lending to countries outside their area by banks in the Group of 10 major countries plus Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg and Spain, fell by \$23 billion or 3.5 per cent to \$633 billion.

The BIS, which acts as central bank to the world's central

banks, said in a half-yearly report on bank lending that total loans to eastern Europe contracted by \$5.1 billion, reflecting a rapid deterioration in the credit-standing of some eastern European countries.

This more than reversed a \$3.3 billion expansion in the preceding six months. Lending to Soviet Union alone fell by \$3.5 billion.

Banks' claims on Latin America fell by a record \$22.8 billion or 13 per cent during the first half of 1990, with all major debtor countries sharing in the contraction.

By far the largest change was a

\$12.7 billion or 21 per cent drop in banks' claims on Mexico, due to the implementation of the Brady plan for relief on \$48.5 billion of its debt.

The Brady plan, named after its creator, U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, surfaced in the spring of 1989 as a way to tackle problems with medium and long-term debt.

A large number of banks exchanged outstanding claims on Mexico for bonds issued by the Mexican government at a discount of 35 per cent, the BIS said.

Lending to Brazil, which re-

mained in arrears, contracted by \$6.2 billion, while overall credits to developing nations in Asia contracted by \$1 billion.

Against the trend, credits to Thailand and China rose by \$1.1 billion and \$1 billion, respectively.

Developed countries outside the banks' area were the only group to attract a substantial amount of fresh loans.

New lending to these countries accelerated to \$6.1 billion from \$3.6 billion in the second half of 1989, with new credits to Australia alone amounting to \$2.5 billion, mostly taken up by companies in the private sector.

Oman aims to spend \$24 billion in new 5-year development plan

NICOSIA (R) — Oman, banking in record high oil revenues, plans to spend 10 per cent more in a new five-year development plan it unveiled Monday.

But Oman's chief economic official said the Gulf Arab state would transfer 15 per cent of its net oil income — main source of revenue — to a special contingency fund in the 1991-95 plan from five per cent in previous years.

"The fourth five-year plan aims at boosting the country's financial position," Omani deputy prime minister for financial and economic affairs, Qais Abdul Monim Al Zawawi told a news conference in Muscat carried by the Omani News Agency.

He forecast total government revenues at nearly 8.57 billion riyals (\$22.20 billion) compared with 6.98 billion riyals (\$18.07 billion) during the previous 1986-90 plan.

Spending would rise 10.2 per cent to 9.45 billion riyals (\$24.48 billion) during the new plan

compared with the old one, he said.

Oman's oil production rose steadily in the 1980s to reach a record high of around 700,000 barrels per day (b/d). But its oil reserves of around 4.3 billion barrels are limited compared with its Gulf neighbours which own nearly two-thirds of the world's proven reserves.

Zawawi said the new plan would focus on boosting industry, agriculture and fisheries, and developing the rural provinces.

He said the government projected oil prices to average around \$20 a barrel during the next five years. They are presently hovering at around \$25 a barrel because of the threat of war in the Gulf.

Asked on what bases the 20 figure was estimated, the agency, received in Cyprus quoted him as saying: "This is a reasonable price after taking into consideration all events, not only in the Gulf region."

Zawawi said any rise in oil

prices above \$20 a barrel would be transferred to an emergency fund to help cushion any economic problems.

"It would also finance part of the budget deficits and other important projects," he added.

Oman last week announced a four per cent increase in its 1991 budget, boosting spending to 1.81 billion riyals (\$4.71 billion).

The new budget gave a deficit of 237 million riyals (\$615 million).

Mohammad Ben Mousa Al Yusef, secretary-general of Oman's Development Council, told the same news conference that the government would avoid borrowing from foreign agencies beyond "recognised levels."

But he added that some 60 million riyals (\$150 million) worth of government bonds would be offered to the public. He gave no further details, but bonds have been used in neighbouring Saudi Arabia to help cover its budget deficits.

Zawawi said the government

was continuing its privatisation drive, but did not say which assets it planned to sell to the private sector.

"The most important aims of the fourth five-year plan is to realise an annual growth rate of 6.3 per cent in the gross domestic product (GDP) at current prices," he said.

It also aims at boosting non-oil revenues so that its share becomes no less than 20 per cent of total income," he noted.

He estimated annual growth rates in the non-oil sector to rise at around 7.3 per cent in the light of progress made in the industrial, agricultural and fisheries sectors.

The plan envisages the per capita income to increase from 2,348 riyals (\$6,081) to 2,685 riyals (\$6,954) in 1995, he said.

Zawawi said the new plan would create around 161,000 new job opportunities and about 60 per cent of new government spendings would be in areas outside the capital Muscat.

U.S. shows reluctance to let large banks fail

WASHINGTON (R) — The federal bailout of the Bank of New England has underscored the U.S. government's reluctance to allow major banks to fail without protecting major depositors.

Federal banking regulators seized control of three banks owned by the Bank of New England Corporation Sunday in a move that protected all deposits, including about \$2 billion in accounts above the \$100,000 deposit insurance limit.

The three subsidiary banks, which had a total of about \$23 billion in assets, will now operate under the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) until they are sold to private investors.

Already Bankamerica Corporation and Banc One Corporation have expressed an interest in purchasing the banks.

Federal regulators said they felt compelled to cover all deposits in order to restore public confidence and protect the stability of the banking system in New England which is in the grip of a severe economic recession.

Following the regulators' action, Bank of New England Corporation, stripped of all but one small bank in Florida, filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy in federal court in Boston Monday. Under Chapter 7, a company is liquidated.

The bankruptcy filing will not affect the banks because the parent company no longer owns them.

The bailout is expected to cost the FDIC about \$2.3 billion and it raised fresh questions about the difficulties the administration of President George Bush faces in trying to reform the deposit insurance system and

modernise the U.S. banking system.

The administration is expected to unveil a package later this month that will call for sweeping reforms of the U.S. banking system and limits on deposit insurance. Officials want to avoid a repeat of the savings and loan disaster that is expected to cost taxpayers up to \$500 billion.

Congress is also expected to take up deposit insurance reform as part of legislation to refinance the dwindling deposit insurance fund.

But plans to limit federal deposit insurance coverage have some of the thousands of small banks up in arms. They are afraid depositors would flock to the major banks in an environment where the government has shown a willingness to protect all depositors of the nation's biggest banks.

U.S. budget deficit seen \$50b higher

WASHINGTON (R) — The 1991 U.S. budget deficit is likely to be \$50 billion more than previously estimated because the recession will cut tax revenues, the Washington Post said in its Tuesday edition.

The Post said Bush administration figures now put the budget for the fiscal year that began last Oct. 1 at between \$300 billion and \$325 billion.

The deficit for the \$1.2 trillion budget had been estimated as at least \$250 billion, counting the cost of the bailout for failed savings and loan institutions.

That estimate did not include the estimated \$30 billion for the U.S. military deployment in the Gulf, a figure that would go much higher if there was a war with Iraq, the Post said.

In addition to reducing tax revenues, a recession increased costs for federal welfare programmes such as food stamps and aid to dependent children, the newspaper said.

Workers who lose their jobs stop taxes and get unemployment benefits.

The U.S. unemployment rate topped six per cent in December, and most economists say the United States is in a recession.

Congress approved the budget last October after a bitter battle with the administration over a budget deficit reduction plan. The final plan calls for \$493 billion in deficit cuts over five years through higher taxes and spending cuts.

Iran offers Gulf goods safe haven

NICOSIA (R) — Iran Tuesday offered storage facilities to businessmen worried that their goods in Gulf countries might be destroyed in any war over Kuwait.

Customs director Morteza Mohammad Khan said the offer, effective immediately, resulted from a November government directive to set up depots in four southern ports.

Goods could be kept for up to 18 months in bonded warehouses or open-air facilities at Bandar Khomeini and Bushehr on the Gulf coast and Jask and Chah Bahar on the Gulf of Oman, Tehran radio, monitored in Nicosia, quoted him as saying.

Mohammad Khan said Iran had received repeated requests from businessmen looking for a safe haven for their goods. The report did not say how much Iran would charge for the service.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

Pan Am files for bankruptcy

NEW YORK (R) — Pan Am Corp. started for cash while seeking a partner to keep its Pan American World Airways flying, said Tuesday it had filed for protection under U.S. bankruptcy law.

The company said its airline subsidiaries will maintain full flight schedules and customer services worldwide while it reorganises.

The New York-based company, a pioneer in air travel, has been negotiating with Trans World Airlines Inc (TWA) over a \$375 million buy-out offer.

The bankruptcy filing appeared to be aimed at facilitating a merger.

TWA and Pan Am had been at odds over what financing TWA might provide if the two faltering airlines agree to merge, according to industry sources.

TWA offered cash and securities valued at about \$375 million in mid-December for Pan Am. TWA Chairman Carl Icahn said he wanted to create a large enough carrier to compete against the nation's two largest airlines, American Airlines and United.

Pan Am said it would consider

a takeover if TWA provided a bridge loan to keep the ailing Pan Am flying while the deal was completed. But TWA said it would provide financing only if cash-hungry Pan Am first filed for bankruptcy, preserving TWA's claim to the cash.

Under the bankruptcy law, a company is protected from its creditors while it reorganises its finances.

Pan Am said the filing was made in federal court in New York. It said it would provide additional details later at a new conference.

War drums batter stocks

TOKYO (R) — Worries of war in the Gulf pushed most Asian bourses lower Tuesday while the dollar gained on its status as a safe-haven investment.

The mood was gloomy on the Tokyo share market ahead of Wednesday's last-ditch talks between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz.

"Basically, the markets have succumbed to fears of war in the Middle East," said Benedict Ivey of Credit Lyonnais Securities (Japan).

The key 225-share Nikkei index closed down 838.73 points or 3.53 per cent to 22,897.84, ending below 23,000 for the first time since Dec. 6, 1990. Roughly

230 million shares changed hands.

Tokyo adopted a bearish mood from the opening, with the Nikkei dropping 297.49 points below Monday's close of 23,796.57 in the first 15 minutes of trade.

The dollar ended firmer as fears of war in the Middle East gripped the market, although activity was quiet ahead of Wednesday's U.S.-Iraqi talks.

The U.S. currency ended at 136.30 yen and 1.5375 marks after closing at 136.00 and 1.5340 in New York Monday.

"You've seen a sort of flight to quality. It's too risky to hold yen in light of war fears and Soviet concerns have kept us away from the mark," said Hiroshi Murata at Sumitomo Bank.

The dollar was supported by buying on its safe-haven status, while fears of political turmoil in the Soviet Union continued to overshadow the mark, traders said.

In regional share markets, Australian stocks slid to their fourth straight closing loss after a day of see-saw trade. The All Ordinaries index dipped 2.6 points to 1236.9.

Taiwan stock prices fell across the board in sluggish trade as fears of war swept through the market. The weighted index closed 215.54 points, or 5.1 per cent, lower at 3,975.53 com-

pared with Monday's 4,191.07 finish.

Share prices in Singapore ended the morning session broadly lower as investors liquidated their positions on war fears.

Traders said a sharp 43-point fall on Wall Street Monday and Tokyo's more than 600 point drop by midday Tuesday also brought nervous selling on the local bourse.

Hong Kong stocks finished lower in dull and directionless trade following early losses on the back of Tokyo's sharp decline.

Oil prices, which closed up nearly \$3 a barrel in the United States Monday, stayed firm in cautious Asian trade.

North Sea Brent blend, the world's mostly widely traded crude, was quoted at \$26.50 a barrel for February, up from \$26.25 in late U.S. trading Monday.

Gold bullion was quoted at \$393.10 per ounce in late trade, compared with \$393.35 in New York Monday.

The fall on Wall Street Monday was the fourth straight down session for the market, bucking the normal trend for stocks to rise in January.

The Dow Jones industrial average shed 43.32 points, or 1.69 per cent, to close at 2,522.77.

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

TOKYO — Stocks finished sharply lower amid gloom over U.S.-Iraqi talks on the Gulf crisis. The Nikkei index closed 838.73 points down at 22,897.84 — below 23,000 for the first time since Dec. 6.

SYDNEY — The market lost its fourth consecutive loss after a day of see-saw trade highlighted by sharp falls in offshore markets. The all ordinaries index dipped 2.6 points to 1,236.9.

HONG KONG — Stocks finished lower in dull and directionless late trade. The Hang Seng closed 17.10 points down at 3,009.42.

SINGAPORE — Prices fell over a broad front in cautious trading ahead of U.S.-Iraqi talks. The Straits Times industrial index of 30 Singapore blue chips closed 14.11 points down at 1,160.59.

BOMBAY — The Bombay stock exchange was closed to enable brokers to complete paperwork. Trading will resume on Wednesday.

FRANKFURT — Shares recovered most of their early losses to end little changed from Monday after operators brought in small volumes to cover short positions. The Dax index ended 4.21 points lower at 1,353.95.

PARIS — French share prices ended with modest losses, rebounding from morning lows on short-covering and hopes of good news from a U.S.-Iraqi meeting on Wednesday, the CAC-40 index closed 5.10 points down at 1,502.77.

ZURICH — Swiss shares closed lower, the market gripped by fears of Gulf war is imminent. In a generally quiet market the all-share SPI index fell 9.4 points, or 1.07 per cent, to 865.4.

LONDON — Prices finished above today's lows but the FTSE 100 index, depressed by fears of a Gulf war, closed at 2,099.9, below the psychological important 2,100 point level.

NEW YORK — U.S. blue chips firmed on bargain-hunting and short-covering after Gulf war fears caused overselling in earlier sessions, traders said. The Dow rose about three to 2,526.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, January 8, 1991		
Central Bank official rates		
	Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	666.0	670.0
Pound Sterling	1267.4	1275.0
Deutsche mark	434.0	436.6
Swiss franc	515.2	518.3
French franc	128.0	128.8
Japanese yen (for 100)	483.7	491.6
Dutch guilder	384.6	386.9
Swedish crown	116.4	117.1
Italian lira (for 100)	57.8	58.1
Belgian franc (for 10)	210.8	212.1

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.9020/30	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1530/40	Canadian dollar	
	1.5370/77	Deutsche mark	
	1.7330/40	Dutch guilders	
	1.2930/40	Swiss francs	
	31.68/73	Belgian francs	
	5.2125/75	French francs	
	1154/5	Italian lire	
	136.50/60	Japanese yen	
	5.7190/40	Swedish crowns	
	6.0050/00	Norwegian crowns	
	5.9190/40	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	389.50/390.25	U.S. dollars	

TODAY AT

Cinema Tel: 677420

CONCORD

ROBOCOP "2"

Show: 3:30, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30 pm

Cinema Tel: 625155

RAINBOW

Ahmad Zaki ... Raghdha ... Sahar Rami

CAPORIA

(Arabic)

Show: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

HER ALIBI

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 675571

NIJOM

WHITE GHOST

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30
Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:00 a.m.

Cinema Tel: 699238

PLAZA

Ahmad Zaki — Raghdha

THE EMPEROR

Show: 12:30, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:45 p.m.

ARABIC FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

The Language Centre at the University of Jordan announces that the intensive course in Modern Standard Arabic for speakers of other languages will commence on January 26, and will last for 16 weeks.

The programme is intensive and classes meet in the morning for 20 hours per week, Saturday-Wednesday. Evening classes meet three days a week: Saturday, Monday, and Wednesday.

Those interested please call at the Language Centre for registration.

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NOTICE

The Embassy of Greece in Amman requests all Greek citizens to report to the Embassy as soon as possible or contact telephone numbers 672331 or 672332.

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MUSIC PRACTICAL EXAMINATIONS

The British Council announces that entries are now being accepted for the April/June 1991 Music Practical exams of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music from 12 January 1991.
Closing date: 23 January 1991.
Registration time: 09:00 am to 12:30 pm. Thursdays are Fridays are excluded.

Soviet troops begin rounding up draft dodgers in 7 republics

MOSCOW (AP) — Soviet troops marched through the Lithuanian capital early Tuesday and were sent to six other secessionist republics to enforce conscription and round up draft dodgers and deserters.

An "armoured column of Soviet military hardware" entered Vilnius at 4:35 a.m. (0235 GMT) and rolled by the republic's legislative building before the 108 vehicles reached army barracks, the Lithuanian government said.

On Monday, the Defence Ministry ordered thousands of paratroopers to the Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia and four other secessionist republics — Moldavia, Armenia, Georgia and the Ukraine.

It said national security was at stake.

The three Baltic republics have been saying for weeks they feared a military crackdown to repress their independence drives. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze announced his resignation last month, saying he feared a dictatorship and a crackdown like those that killed hundreds in 1989 and 1990.

Thousands of young men in those republics have been ignoring orders to serve in the Red Army. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have enacted laws allowing their young men to do alternative service, such as hos-

pital or social work, instead of serving in the Red Army. Thousands have exercised the option, which the national government says is illegal.

At least two republics were given deadlines to comply with national draft laws or face military action — Friday for Latvia and Sunday for Estonia.

Estonian President Edgar Savisaar and Lithuanian Prime Minister Kazimieras Prunskiene both headed for Moscow, where Mrs. Prunskiene said she hoped to meet with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Mavriks Vulfsons, a national lawmaker from Latvia, said Tuesday that Gen. Fyodor Kuzmin, commander of the Baltic military district, told him Monday that the army would not punish deserters and would allow them to serve in Latvia if they turned themselves in.

"We won't ask them (deserters) to go," he said. "But we will try to say to them, 'maybe it would be better to go into the army or to hide. It's up to you. It's a problem of your conscience.'"

But Vulfsons warned that if draft-age youths did not respond to orders to serve, troops would start searching for them and "it will be a brutal thing."

The Lithuanian legislature Monday called the decision to send troops "one more brutal

step" by the Soviet leadership to provoke destabilisation and conflict in the Baltics, Lithuanian radio reported.

Thousands of workers demonstrated outside the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet Tuesday to protest huge price hikes for food and other basic goods announced Monday.

The Lithuanian News Agency, ELTA, said the demonstrators, many of them drunk, were holding up banners demanding the republic's government resign. About 100 broke through the building's huge steel front door before they were driven away by police with water hoses, ELTA said.

Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis, in a broadcast speech, urged "all people of goodwill" to defend the Supreme Soviet and counter the demonstrators.

Nikolajs Neilands, a Latvian member of the national legislature, called the dispatch of troops "a show of muscle." He said he would not characterise it as a crackdown yet, but felt it could develop into one.

Ilmars Bisers, another Latvian lawmaker interviewed Tuesday in Moscow, called the dispatch of troops "a game."

"The first step was the Printing House," he said, referring to the occupation of Latvia's main printing plant by Interior Minis-

try troops. "Now it's an escalation."

The Defence Ministry said in announcing the deployment Monday that this year's draft has been "especially alarming."

The compliance rate for conscription is just 12.5 per cent in Lithuania and 10 per cent in Georgia, it said. Other rates are 58.9 per cent for Moldova; 28.1 per cent for Armenia; 25.3 per cent for Latvia; 25.5 per cent for Estonia.

"Local authorities in certain union republics have been increasingly negligent in performing duties to ensure the country's defence capability in accordance with Soviet laws," the Defence Ministry statement said.

The national military draft campaign "is in danger," it said. "Workload on soldiers in undermanned units is above the norm. This contradicts social justice and cannot be tolerated."

The statement said "paratroopers and air forces" will be involved in the search for draft evaders and deserters.

It did not say how many troops would be involved or when they would be deployed. Officials in several republics were unable to confirm Tuesday whether troops had arrived.

Baltic officials said at least two divisions were expected in their regions. A division normally has 10,000 soldiers.

The U.S. ambassador in Moscow met Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze Monday and expressed concern about Kremlin plans to dispatch troops to the Baltic republics, the State Department said in Washington.

"As I said last week, we would be very concerned about any sort of provocation," spokesman Richard Boucher said. "Ambassador (Jack) Matlock reiterated again our policy in his meetings."

Third World seeks total ban on nuclear tests, U.S. rejects

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Indonesia, chairman of a conference to ban nuclear tests, accused the United States, the Soviet Union and other powers Monday of failing to live up to past promises of stopping nuclear explosions.

Moscow immediately sought to distance itself from the United States as Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, in a message to the conference, confirmed his country's readiness to stop nuclear tests if the United States does.

"We are ready to amend the 1963 treaty so as to convert its limitations into a comprehensive ban," he said. "We call upon other states to support this long-rumored decision."

The United States, Britain, France, China and the Soviet Union all conducted underground tests in 1990.

Officially, the two-week conference is to discuss a proposed amendment widening a 1963 treaty banning nuclear explosions in the atmosphere, outer space and underwater to include underground testing. Sponsors include Indonesia, Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka, Mexico, Venezuela and Peru.

Washington, which has sent a low-level delegation to the conference, has firmly rejected a ban on underground testing, believing weapons must be tested to be sure they work and that newer, safer ones must also be developed. It also contends the backbone of its foreign policy is a credible deterrent.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said Moscow, London and Washington wanted 27 years ago to discontinue all tests.

In the view of the overwhelming majority of the international community, the depositary states have failed to fulfil their obligations under existing treaties and other agreed commitments," he said.

France and China never signed the original treaty and the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union have veto power over any amendment.

But although none of the more than 70 countries attending the two-week conference expects Washington and others to approve such a ban at the moment, they are determined to show the nuclear powers how most of the world feels about testing.

Cheney cancels navy jet programme

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Defence Department's decision to cancel the \$52 billion A-12 Stealth aircraft programme is a major blow not only to the navy but also to the project's two prime contractors and thousands of their workers now facing layoffs.

Defence Secretary Dick Cheney announced Monday that he ended the full-scale development contracts for the A-12, meaning work on the proposed radar-evading attack aircraft stops without one plane having ever gotten off the ground.

"It's gone, it's over," said Cheney's spokesman, Pete Williams.

It was the largest weapons programme ever canceled by the Pentagon, Williams said.

The contractors were declared in default of the contract for failing to design and develop the wedge-shaped airplane on time and according to the navy's specifications.

The A-12 development contracts are classified secret, but internal navy and Defence Department reports released recently said the project had fallen more than 18 months behind schedule and at least \$1 billion over budget. Just six months ago, Cheney told Congress the project was on sound footing and within its budget.

The programme also is the subject of a federal criminal investigation.

General Dynamics Corp., which teamed with McDonnell Douglas Corp. on the A-12 development contract, said after Cheney's announcement that it would immediately begin laying off about 4,000 workers at plants in Fort Worth, Texas, and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

In St. Louis, McDonnell Douglas said it notified 3,000 workers they would be laid off, and that an additional 2,000 may be dropped.

General Dynamics also said it would fight Cheney's decision to declare the contractors in default of the contract terms. The companies have filed claims to recover \$1.4 billion in extra development costs, which the Pentagon said it will not pay.

General Dynamics "is clearly not in default of the contract," and "would contest the default and pursue its rights for all work done and costs incurred on the programme to date," said Chris Schindler, a company spokesman.

"I never thought this would happen... It's a complete shock. I don't know what I'm going to do," said Peggy Kramer, a McDonnell Douglas worker in St. Louis who expects to be laid off. She said she didn't find out about the decision until she got home and saw it on television.

The navy wanted the A-12 Avenger in operation by the mid-1990s to replace its nearly obsolete fleet of carrier-based A-6 Intruder planes, and it told Cheney last Saturday that a government bailout of the contractors could save the programme.

But Cheney decided to stop the project after determining that neither the contractors nor the navy could say exactly how much government money would be needed to get the work back on schedule, Williams said.

"I do not believe a bailout is in the national interest," Cheney said in a statement. "If we cannot spend the taxpayers' money wisely, we will not spend it."

Cheney had warned last month that he might end the programme if the navy could not show why it should continue. But his decision was still a major surprise, mainly because it leaves the navy with no active alternative for replacing the A-6s, which have been in service since the mid-1960s.

"The United States needs to maintain the capability to project power through the use of naval strike forces," Cheney said, but he offered no specifics.

Williams said the Pentagon was studying possible alternatives to the A-12. Among the possibilities, he said, were further modifications to the Intruder to extend its useful life, and modifying other existing aircraft to perform the all-weather, carrier-based strike mission of the Intruder.

The main technical problem faced by the A-12 developers, according to Pentagon reports, was keeping down the aircraft's weight while making it strong enough to endure carrier landings and takeoffs.

The contract with McDonnell Douglas and General Dynamics, signed in January 1988, called for eight prototype planes at a cost of no more than \$4.8 billion.

Vicious deaths mark end of abortive Haiti coup bid

PORT-AU-PRINCE (R) — The death toll in an abortive coup attempt by Duvalierist forces in Haiti Monday reached at least 40 by nightfall, some of the dead were charred remains on pavements while others were shot or hacked to death by machetes.

The coup attempt lasted about nine hours, until the military stormed the presidential palace, where a former interior minister under the Duvalier regime, Roger Lafontant and about a dozen supporters took control shortly after midnight.

However, radio reports and diplomatic sources said killings, burning and looting continued throughout the day.

Some of the victims were believed by their attackers to be members of the dreaded Tontons Macoutes, the para-military force that helped keep the Duvalier family in power for more than three decades until 1986 when Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier fled the country.

Other victims were supporters of President-elect Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the populist priest who won the presidency by a wide majority in elections on Dec. 6, campaigning against the Duvalier forces and the Tontons Macoutes, which have remained a potent force in Haitian political life.

Aristide is scheduled to take office next month, but according to a leading member of his National Front for Change and Democracy the front is divided on whether he should take power immediately.

"The people are now seeking the immediate installation of Aristide as president," Evans Paul, mayor-elect of this capital city, told Reuters in Miami.

Paul, in Miami seeking advice

on urban planning when the coup attempt occurred, said that it was not clear whether Aristide could constitutionally assume power before his official inauguration.

Provisional President Ertha Pascal Truillot, who had earlier announced her resignation at gunpoint in the presidential palace, had been scheduled to hold office until Aristide's inauguration on Feb. 7.

She told the nation in a television address Monday that she would continue as president as scheduled.

"I will watch over Haiti. I will watch over you, the people," she said.

Meanwhile, demonstrators outside army headquarters here were demanding that Lafontant and his co-conspirators be turned over to them for swift justice.

"We want to burn him," the crowd chanted. According to Paul, who was keeping track of events via telephone, military officers were of two minds about whether to give Lafontant up or hold him for trial.

However, army leaders said on a television broadcast Monday night that the conspirators would be turned over for civilian trial.

Paul said that while newly-elected officials wanted to calm the situation in the smoke-enshrouded city, "We understand the reaction of the people."

Barricades of burning tyres, a familiar sight during Haitian periods of unrest, sent smoke billowing into the sky as night fell over the restive city, where shops and businesses had been set afire and one old cathedral torched.

Peruvian police kill hijacker, free passengers

LIMA (R) — Peruvian police stormed a commandeered airliner as it stood on the tarmac at Lima's international airport Monday, killing the lone hijacker while terrified passengers, ducked for cover, police said.

At least two people were wounded in a brief gunbattle aboard the Fawcett airliner when police swept into the plane after the man hijacked the domestic flight to Lima, police and airport authorities said.

The man, wearing a Balacava and armed with two grenades and a pistol, had demanded \$750,000 and fuel to fly the McDonnell Douglas DC-8 on to an undisclosed city, police said.

The hijacker, identified as Jose Soto and described by police as deranged, commandeered Fawcett Flight 339 as it flew from the northern city of

Trujillo to Lima with about 100 people on board.

"He hijacked the plane as we were about to land in Lima... he threatened us and said he had a pistol and some grenades," a distraught passenger told reporters after the ordeal.

After landing in Lima, Soto allowed about half the passengers to leave, most of them women and children.

Heavily-armed police in camouflage gear surrounded the plane at Lima's Jorge Chavez Airport and, after two tense hours, moved into the plane and shot the man in the back of the neck, police said.

Soto began firing wildly, wounding a passenger and an airport security man before slumping to the floor and dying, police said. The remaining passengers were freed unharmed.

2 rebel officers captured outside Manila church

MANILA (R) — Two leaders of a mutinous army faction were arrested by Philippine security forces as they stepped out of a Manila church after attending a service, the armed forces said Tuesday.

Army Chief Major-General Guillermo Flores told reporters the arrests of lieutenants Vicente Tomas and Emil Ong Sunday dealt a major blow to rebel plans to launch destabilisation attacks against the government during the Gulf crisis.

An army spokesman said Tomas and Ong were seized by soldiers after attending the baptism of Tomas's daughter.

The armed forces said Tomas was the operations officer of the Young Officers Union (YOU), a radical army group involved in the December 1989 coup attempt that almost toppled President Corason Aquino.

It said Ong, who was imprisoned after the failed coup and escaped while on a pass to see his dentist, acted as YOU spokesman, issuing statements denouncing Aquino's allegedly weak leadership.

"Their capture... will surely disrupt if not totally destroy the future plans of the (rebels) to destabilise the government, especially those monitored to have been planned to be carried out by them amidst the Gulf crisis," Flores said.

Government forces on Jan. 1 recaptured renegade Air Force Colonel Rodolfo Calzado who had escaped from jail after being convicted of taking part in a 1987 coup attempt and sentenced to 12 years imprisonment by a military tribunal.

Aquino has survived seven army rebellions in her almost five years in office. The dissidents have vowed to try again.

Pyongyang will drop isolationist policy — Roh

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo predicted Tuesday that North Korea would soon drop its cold war isolationist policy, paving the way for a breakthrough in inter-Korean ties.

"In light of the external and internal imperatives, North Korea appears to be undergoing a critical stage, and it will soon have to drop the self-imposed isolationist policy," Roh told a New Year news conference.

"In a not-too-distant future North Korea will have to change, and we may come to a significant turning point in the South-North relations," he said.

Roh predicted Seoul, after scoring a major propaganda coup

over the North last year by establishing diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union, would be able to set up formal ties with China, Pyongyang's principal ally, in the near future.

He renewed his long-standing call for a meeting with North Korean President Kim Il-Sung and said he sensed Kim was warming to the idea.

"Regarding our continuous suggestions on a summit meeting with North Korea's Kim Il-Sung, I personally think he himself is seriously considering holding a summit meeting," Roh said.

"If he and I meet, the deep-rooted distrust and misunderstanding can easily be solved," he said.

Drivers scramble for stolen cash in tunnel

WINDSOR, Ontario (R) — Drivers stopped their cars and scrambled for dollar bills in the international tunnel between Detroit and Windsor, Ontario, after a robber faction captured \$6,500 out of the window of his car, police said Monday. "It was like confetti," a Windsor police spokesman said.

"Some people stopped their cars and picked it up. It was like Christmas." Police are appealing to people to return the money, but so far only \$30 has been recovered. Police have charged Derrick Hills, 30, of Detroit with robbing a Windsor bank.

Art treasure to be returned to church

DALLAS (AP) — A collection of medieval art treasures that an American soldier took out of Germany at the end of World War II will be returned to a German church under a newly announced settlement. The agreement was reached after an eight-hour meeting Monday in London between representatives for the soldier's family and the Lutheran Church of Quedlinburg, said Steve Rahhal, a Dallas attorney whose firm represents the church. Two members of the Interior Ministry of Germany also were present, Rahhal said. The settlement contained a financial agreement, but attorneys for both sides refused to discuss the terms. The soldier, Joe T. Meador, died in 1980, leaving the collection to his brother, Jack Meador of Whitewright, Texas, and sister, Jane Meador Cook of Mesquite, a Dallas suburb. An art investigator working with the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation tracked the Quedlinburg Treasures in May to Whitewright, which lies 100 kilometres north of Dallas. The church then sued to regain the works, charging that Meador stole the cache of priceless objects, which were hidden in a mill in the Quedlinburg area of what until recently was East Germany. Meador told a friend that he stumbled onto the treasure during a battle and simply shipped them home in a plain brown wrapper. U.S. forces occupied the area southwest of Berlin in 1945. The treasures include a 10th-century Byzantine rock-crystal flask and an ivory comb inlaid with precious stones. But most of the gold, silver and jewel-studded treasures are reliquaries, or containers in which relics are kept and displayed for veneration. Dietrich Koetzche, a German art expert who inspected the relics for the church last year, has said that the objects "rank among the three most significant medieval church treasures in Germany."

Police officer retires after 256 muggings

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Not many people can make a career out of being mugged, but Bill Langlois was one of the few. The San Francisco police officer was choked, kicked, beaten and robbed 256 times during his career, he served as bait for a decoy to see a crime from its inception... from the first time the suspect looked you over to the time of the arrest," said Langlois, who retired Friday after nearly 28 years on the force. "Knowing that you could be attacked every day made me feel more apprehensive than any other time I've known." Langlois, 56, completed his decoy service in mid-1987 after specialising in nabbing muggers who preyed on the elderly. He disguised himself as a sick old man, hunching over a cane, but his attackers still often used guns and knives. As a result, Langlois was awarded the police department's gold medal, the force's highest citation for valor, and he got the nickname "Rug Rat" because he spent so much time getting his face shoved into the street by his attackers. Langlois, one of the department's most decorated officers, also won six silver and two bronze medals for bravery. Before his decoy duty, Langlois served 14 years in the department's canine unit with a German shepherd who specialised in sniffing out bombs. In 1968, Langlois killed an ex-convict in a gun duel after the armed robbery of a motel. During the past three years, he served as a patrol officer. "I got the most satisfaction in helping old people," he said. "I found my career one of great contrasts, ranging from saving lives to having to kill someone."

8 killed, 180 injured in commuter train accident at London station

LONDON (AP) — Eight people were feared dead and 180 were injured after a packed commuter train plowed into crash barriers at a London station during rush hour Tuesday morning, rescue workers said.

Dozens more were trapped in the wreckage, they said.

Police declared a "major disaster" at the Cannon Street Station in the centre of the city's financial district. Firemen battled to free people from the wreckage of the commuter train, which had originated at Sevenoaks, 35 kilometres south east of London.

"There are 15 casualties trapped under the train, of whom seven are alive," said a spokeswoman for the London Ambulance Service. She said the other eight were feared dead.

British Rail could not confirm the death toll, but said the injured included 30 people who were seriously hurt.

The state-owned network said the brakes failed to stop the 35-year-old train and it slammed into the barriers at about 5 mph (8 kph). The driver escaped injury.

"The driver put on the brakes, but the train did not stop,"

British Rail spokesman Chris Jennings said. "It pushed the buffers in and came to an abrupt halt. The fifth and sixth carriages (rail cars) crashed together."

Hours after the 0844 GMT crash, firemen were still struggling to cut trapped passengers out of the mangled fifth and sixth cars, which took the brunt of the impact.

The crash of the 10-car train, which had been due to be replaced in two years, was the fifth serious British Rail accident since December 1989, when 35 people were killed at Clapham in southeast London.

The latest accident appeared likely to renew charges the network is outdated and underfunded.

Sirens wailed across the city of London, the capital's 2.6 square kilometre financial district, as fleets of ambulances ferried the injured to hospitals.

Officials at St. Bartholomew's Hospital said 30 of the injured were seriously hurt.

Fire engines, ambulances and police cars ringed the station, one of the terminals for British Rail's network southeast, its busiest section.

Helicopters landed outside the station to take some of the

most badly hurt to hospitals, said Gerald Clarkson, chief fire officer of the London Fire Brigade.

Firemen carrying oxygen masks treated dozens of injured at the scene.

Rescue workers led injured passengers who could walk, some crying and wearing hastily applied bandages, to ambulances.

Several financial executives walked from the platform in pinstriped suits splattered with blood.

A temporary mortuary was set up at the station.

"Suddenly there was a violent crash," said passenger Charlotte Stott, 20, a bank employee, describing the action when the train hit the barrier. "People were getting off the train and suddenly bodies were falling everywhere."

A London ambulance spokesman, requesting anonymity, said the train appeared to have hit the crash buffers at about 32 kilometres per hour.

Dr. David Skinner of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Emergency Department said bodies trapped in the wreckage hampered "attempts by rescue workers to get to those trapped alive."

ANC calls for interim S. African government, all-party conference

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — The African National Congress (ANC) Tuesday called for a conference for all political groups in South Africa to form a provisional government and quickly abolish apartheid.

"This year we must focus our attention on the central question confronting our country — the question of the transfer of power to the people," the ANC said in a major statement.

ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela warned that the government must keep promises on releasing political prisoners and other issues or its commitment to ending white-minority rule would be questioned.

"Failure to do this will put in very serious doubt the announced commitment of the government to genuine negotiations and further sharpen questions about its readiness to keep

to agreements it has entered into," the ANC said in the statement marking its 79th anniversary.

But Mandela said he remained confident about talks with the government on sharing power with the black majority. "I have nothing to be despondent about... despite the differences that have emerged, we are confident we are going to make progress," he told a press conference also attended by ANC President Oliver Tambo and other top leaders.

The opposition group added that despite some progress, apartheid still dominated South Africa. "The reality we still face is that, whatever might have been done or said during the past year, our country continues to be ruled by an apartheid white minority regime."

The ANC's proposal could

help clear the way for constitutional talks with the government. Progress in preparatory talks has stalled over release of political prisoners, return of ANC exiles and other issues.

President F.W. de Klerk has insisted that all political groups must play a role in deciding a future non-apartheid constitution. The ANC's proposal would fit into government views.

The ANC statement said it still wanted an elected constituent assembly, which alone could "draw up a new constitution. But as a first step, it called for an all-party conference to set the basis for a new constitution."

The congress would set out "broad principles" for drawing up a new constitution — determine who would draw up a new constitution — and establish an interim government to oversee the transition to a majority government.

IRA 'planned' huge attack on Irish prisons

PARIS (R) — Irish nationalists planned to use 250 tonnes of explosives and arms for an attack on two prisons holding convicted republicans, a Paris court has heard.

The court, trying five Irishmen accused of smuggling the arms from Libya, was told the Irish Republican Army (IRA) planned to attack two prisons in Northern Ireland — the maze at Long Kesh, the main prison for guerrillas, and a women's jail in south Armagh.

Court President Martine Anzani said the plan was revealed by Adrian Hopkins, skipper of a ship that made five voyages carrying 250 tonnes of

arms and explosives from Libya to Ireland between 1985 and 1987.

Hopkins, captured off France in October 1987 when the arms ship Eksund developed engine trouble, is being tried in his absence. He was freed on bail last year and fled to Ireland, where he is now in custody.

"He told investigators that in 1987 none of the explosives and weapons had been used and they were being kept for an attack on a women's prison in south Armagh and on the Long Kesh Prison," Anzani said.

The Eksund was carrying 150 tonnes of weapons and explosives destined for the IRA when

it was intercepted by French customs in 1987.

Five men, three of whom are said to be members of the IRA, were charged with the illegal transport of arms. Anzani rejected a plea that charges against Hopkins should be deferred.

She said police investigations had shown the Eksund's cargo was the fifth gun-running expedition from Libya to remote Irish beaches.

The three reported IRA members, Gabriel Cleary, James Coll and James Doherty, were defiant in court, admitting their presence on the Eksund and condemning Britain's "occupying force" in Northern Ireland.